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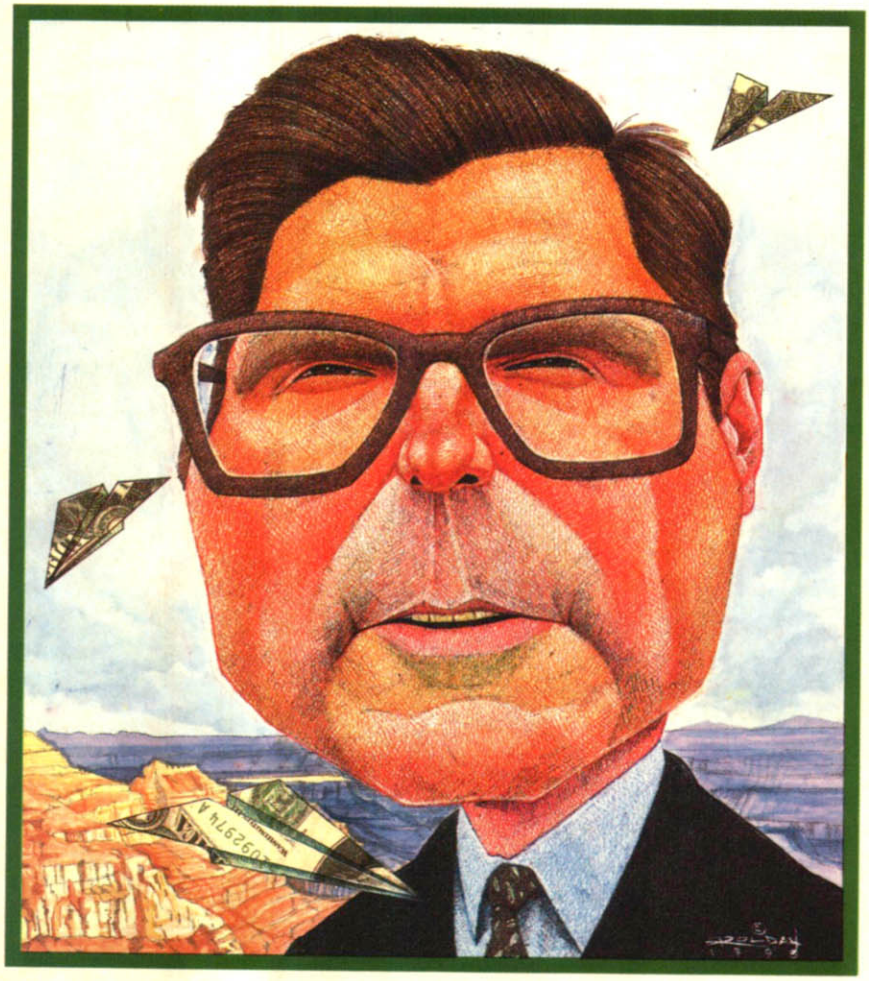

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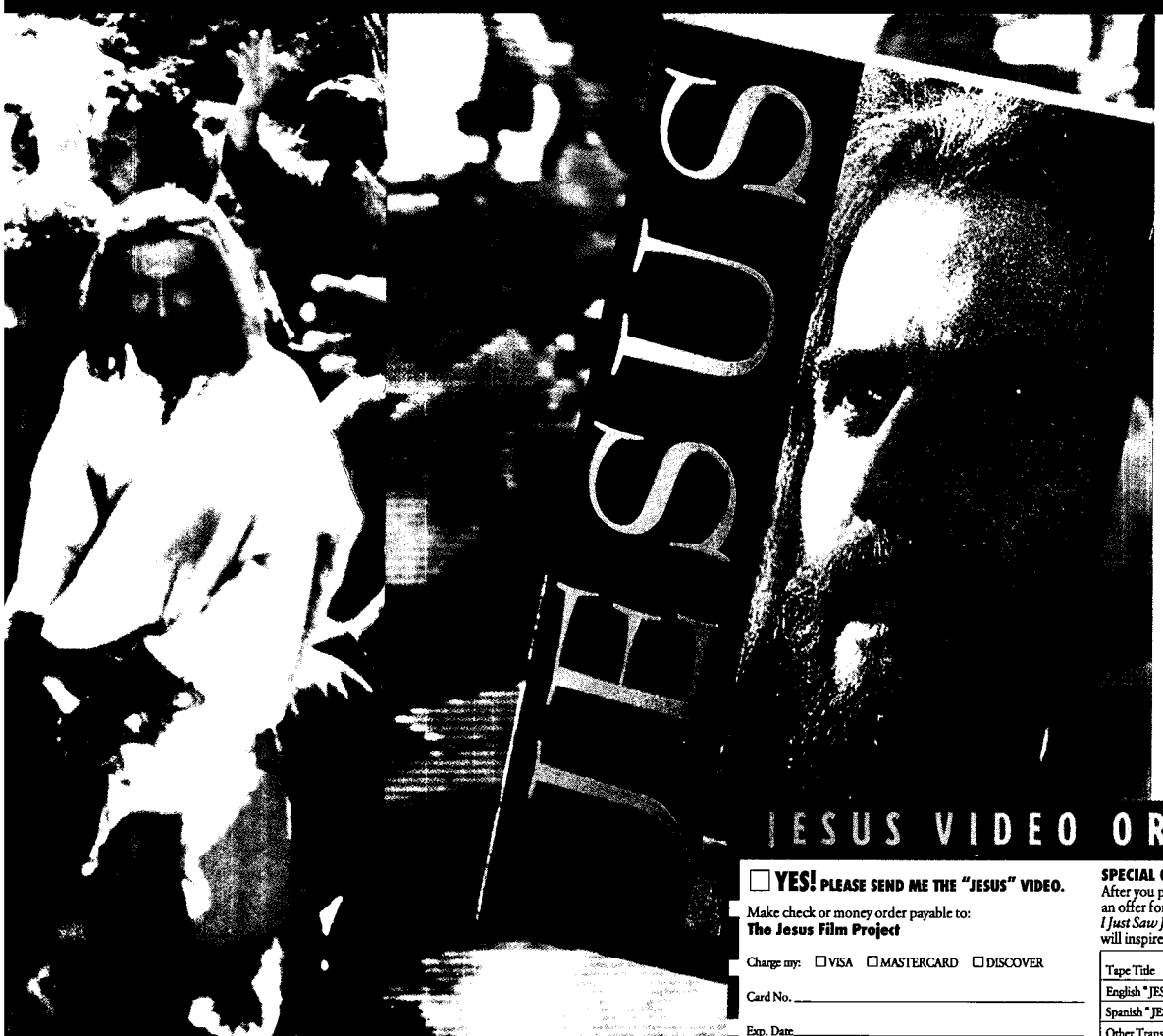

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The PLO and Yassir Arafat. Israel is making this fateful arrangement with a terror organization. According to its "covenant", which has never been rescinded, the PLO has only one aim: the destruction of the state of Israel through force and violence. The aim is and has always been the notorious "phased plan": to eliminate Israel in two stages—first by creating a Palestinian state in any territory vacated by Israel and then using that state to foment an allied Arab assault against the truncated and critically vulnerable Jewish state.

Until recently, Arafat was officially declared a terrorist by the United States government and was not allowed entry into our country. He is personally responsible for hundreds of assassinations and terrorist attacks. The fact that such a man could appear on the White House lawn, that he could shake hands with the President of the United States, and with the Prime Minister of Israel is truly astonishing.

A mortal danger to Israel. Turning over control of the Gaza strip and any part of the "West Bank" to the Arabs puts Israel in mortal peril. The basic conflict is not between Israel and the "Palestinians", with whom some accommodation, some arrangement of autonomy, could certainly be reached. The basic conflict is with the Arab nations, all of which, with the sole exception of Egypt, are still in a state of war with Israel. They are armed to the teeth, not just with "conventional" weapons, but with missiles that even today can reach any part of Israel, and with weapons of mass destruction—chemical, biological and nuclear.

With the "West Bank" in Arab hands, missiles won't be needed. Mortars and shoulder-held Stingers would suffice to threaten every commercial flight into and out of Israel, to impede the take-off of military airplanes and to threaten and rain destruction on the principal cities of Israel and its most important industrial, commercial and military installations. Sure, the world would insist that the new Palestinian state be demilitarized. But does anybody really believe that with Israel surrounded by mortal enemies, they would allow such a military vacuum to exist for any length of time—even in the unlikely case that the Palestinians would so desire? If it yielded the "West Bank", Israel would be only 9 miles wide at its narrow waist—it would take no major military effort to slice it in half and to destroy it. No country should expose itself to such peril. But with the Judean hills in enemy hands, and without the elaborate warning system on those hills, Israel is totally indefensible and at the mercy of its enemies. That is the opinion of 100 U.S. generals and admirals who so reported to the President and to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"If it yielded the "West Bank", Israel would be only 9 miles wide at its narrow waist—it would take no major military effort to slice it in half and to destroy it. No country should expose itself to such peril".

We all want peace and, surely, besieged Israel, which has been under constant attack since the day of its creation, wants peace more than anybody. And it is likely that such fervent wish for peace has led Israel into making fateful concessions to Yassir Arafat and the PLO. It will be almost impossible to reverse what has been done. The process of empowering the Palestinians will almost certainly result in a Palestinian state. Will it, as we are told, be "democratic" and peaceful? Not likely! Every one of the 22 Arab states is totalitarian, ruled autocratically, and ruthlessly abusive of human rights. Another Lebanon, carved on Israel's back, with never-ending strife and bloodshed is much more likely—a source of constant terrorist attacks against Israel and ultimately the source of a new Mid-East war. In such a war, Israel's ability to defend itself and to prevail would be in serious question.

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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR

Volume 26 Number 12, December 1993

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ABOUT THIS MONTH

by

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski

AT A WASHINGTON SOIRÉE in late October, the Hon. Newt Gingrich, the next Republican minority leader, regaled a small group of journalists and other honchos with endless rounds of historical observations and political insights. He stressed two related points: Under Lyndon Johnson and George McGovern, the Democratic Party moved too far left of public opinion and never came back. Yet the Republican Party has resisted every effort by the American people to make it the majority party. The problem goes back to the Depression, when a cowed commercial class withdrew from political activity to the safety of its country clubs and golf courses, fulfilling Felix Frankfurter's fervent hope that the New Deal would drive the businessman out of politics. Gingrich, in other words, has some long-standing scores to settle.

HARKENING BACK TO A GOP of romance and greatness, not only under Lincoln but also under forthright defenders of industrial democracy like William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, Gingrich wants to remind the party of job creation of its responsibility to attend to politics. It means paying more attention to what people want, developing an appetite for power, showing a bit of soul—what he calls "music" (a failing first noted by Edmund Burke; see Kenneth Minogue, page 81). It means cultivating the life of the mind (for heroes in the cause, see this year's roster of Christmas Book contributors, beginning on page 20; meanwhile, Kenneth S. Lynn exposes an intellectual charlatan—see page 52). It means learning to withstand the left's assaults with equanimity. Short of Nixon and Reagan, no Republican politico has been vilified on such a scale as Gingrich by the servitor media—who've naturally ignored his practically unopposed rise to the leadership of the House Republicans. As Grover G. Norquist reports on the brewing showdown with Clinton socialism (see page 70), Gingrich must be doing something right. Or as the *New Republic* put it a few issues back in its tribute to the *Wall Street Journal*'s editorial page, Viva Newt!

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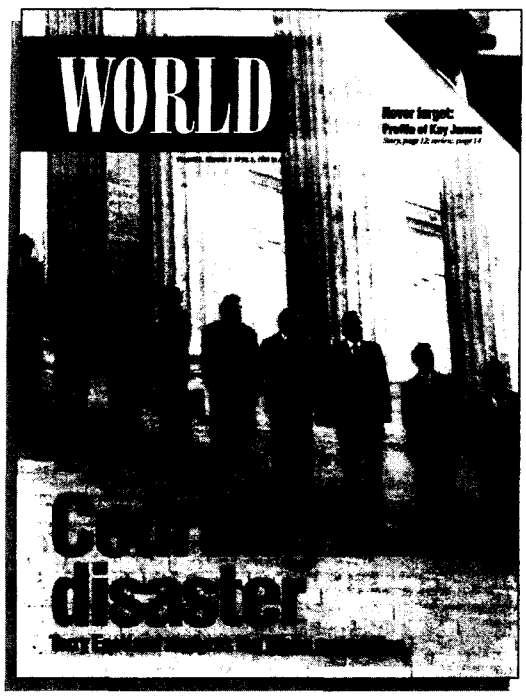

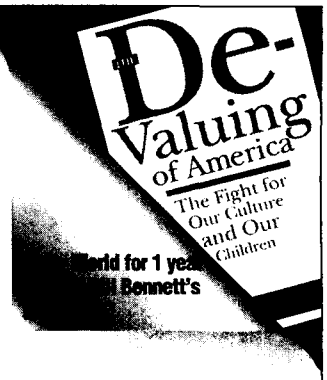

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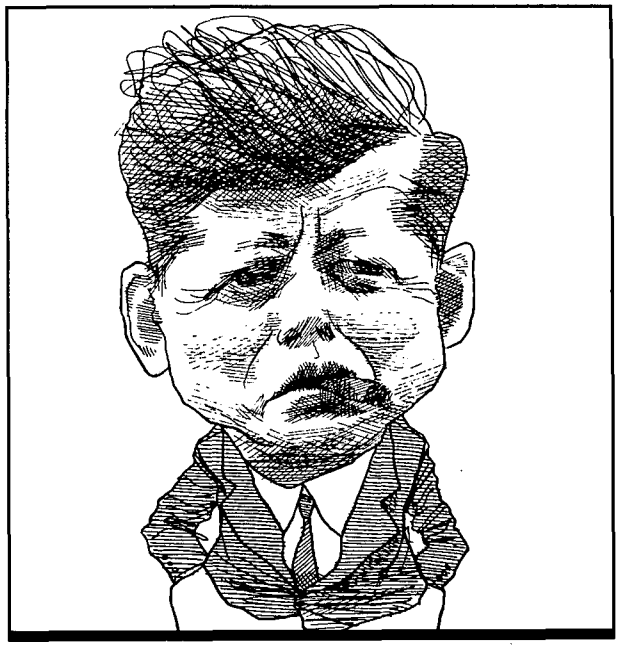

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By stressing values and opening up credit to the Third World's poor, Opportunity Programs is breaking the World Bank's international aid monopoly.

Allah in L.A., by Edward Norden 38

Will the freedom America extends to its third-largest faith teach Islam's adherents to cherish democracy?

Federico's Folly, by Michael Fumento 42

Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña got his job by wasting $10 billion on the biggest public works disaster of modern times—an airport worse in every way than the one it replaced.

Cover illustration by Ismael Roldán. Interior art by Ismael Roldán, John Springs, and Jake Tapper.

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• October is no longer among us. It will go down in history as the month in which Boy Clinton's foreign policy showed itself to be at one with his domestic policy, that is, a disaster executed by the best and the brightest 1960s youth, who have spent over two decades transforming themselves into dullards, incompetents, and fools, but great glad-handers and gifted honeyfoglers. By the end of the month, Boy Clinton's approval rating had slipped back to 43 percent, while his disapproval rating was up to 42 percent. And in Russia the citizenry did to their White House what many Americans would like to do to ours. They put it to the torch, with the Communist holdovers in it. An insight into the quality of mind that obtained there can be gained from the tape of a conversation between the insurgents' embattled leader, Mr. Alexander Rutskoi, and Mr. Valery Zorkin, chairman of the Constitutional Court, whom he has called for help. "Well, Valera, I've just sent people out with the white flag but they were flayed alive, then finished off at point-blank range. . . . They won't leave us alive. I beg you, phone the embassies. . . . I beg you, Valera, well, you understand, you believe in God, f--- you, you will have sin on your head." There must be days when locutions like this can be heard in our White House, no?

• Thousands of hitherto healthy Japanese were condemned to hunger when busybody customs agents in Oslo, Norway, interdicted 3.5 tons of putatively illegal whale meat labeled euphemistically "shrimp." In the American Middle West, scientists reported unexpectedly good news from the summer's devastating floods. The floods uprooted whole communities but now comes word that they also uncovered a mother lode of fossils, some dating back 375 million years before Miss Janet Reno was made attorney general! In the Muslim nation of Brunei, officials are attributing an unanticipated outbreak of illicit sexual congress to the large number of *New York Times* that are smuggled into the country, apparently for the many lingerie advertisements that appear there and are known to drive young Bruneians of both sexes into lewd raptures. On October 7, one of London's most respected dailies, the *Independent,* reported what the paper duly described as "an extraordinary attack" by Mr. John Patten, the secretary of state for education, upon two of Her Majesty's chief education officers. If the *Independent* is to be believed, Mr. Patten termed one "a nutter" and the other "deeply lippy." That is coming dangerously close to McCarthyism, Mr. Patten.

• Despite remonstrances from the Clinton administration, China exploded

an eighty-to-ninety-kiloton nuclear bomb, demonstrating once again the Chinese government's pathetic ignorance of the public relations art. A very good case can be made for renewed nuclear testing purely on environmental grounds. Remember that it's only since the major powers ended above-ground nuclear tests that the world became so agitated over global warming, acid rain, an ozone layer that is beginning to look like Swiss cheese, and those endless world tours by Michael Jackson and Madonna. Now there are growing fears that the North Koreans are going ahead with nuclear programs, and if they have the good sense to report that they are undertaking them merely to return the planet to the environmentally pristine condition it enjoyed during the Stone Age, the North Koreans will score a PR coup and be in a good position to destroy New York City. This year's Nobel Prize for Literature went to Miss Toni Morrison; Mr. Rod McKuen could be next.

• A damper was put on the Milan Fashion Show early in October when word arrived that archaeologists in Xinjang, western China, have unearthed 2,000-year-old corpses whose couture and cosmetic development were two millennia ahead of the Milan Show's most admired creations. "Most of the female corpses have hair nets," reports the Chinese news service Xinhua, and "some have tattoos on their faces." Moreover, all the corpses had about the same vital statistics as the models in Milan and the same sallow complexions. In the longest and most solipsistic press conference in world history, Mr. Michael Jordan, the basketball player, retired from sport. No one, well almost no one, laughed, and in reporting these dismal proceedings sports writers adopted a tone reminiscent of the late Mr. Franz Kafka.

• Environmentalists concerned about the maniacal rate at which Americans have been depleting our natural resources were given cause for celebration when the Census Bureau reported that the number of poor people increased for the third consecutive year in 1992. In medical news, Saudi Arabian men of science accompanying their country's national soccer team to Doha, Qatar, for the team's match with South Korea attempted to revive fallen countrymen by fanning them with portraits of King Fahd. If the results prove promising, the pictures could be sent to America's new Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders to be used as birth control devices in the public schools.

• Drama grips Hempstead, Texas, and

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Hempstead High's Fighting Bobcats, who are off to a slow start this football season (0-4) owing to controversy that has entoiled those four Fighting Bobcat cheerleaders who have turned up pregnant. Three have been banned from the playing field and the fourth, who attempted to save her career by having an abortion, has been shamed into attending games purely as a spectator. Many locals are enraged by the turpitude of it all, and, of course, there has been some chortling. It does not help that Hempstead calls itself the Watermelon Capital of Texas. In the great state of Georgia, an imbroglio has arisen over the decision by students and faculty to name the Kennesaw State Owls' stadium the Hooter Dome, a name interpreted by local feminists and other sexual obsessives as a reference to mammary glands. Mr. John Moriarty, the gifted editor of the school newspaper's sports page, denies any lewd intent: "We are the Owls; why shouldn't our place be called the Hooter Dome?" But he is up against feminists of real genius. Responds the school's assistant professor of Uralic and Altaic studies and wellness coordinator, Dr. Susan Butler: "To me, disrespect for women hurts their health in terms of self-esteem."

• On October 18, NASA sent seven astronauts aloft in the *Columbia* for a 14-day space mission, the program's longest, though still far behind the record set by Russian cosmonauts Vasily Tsibliyev and Alexander Serebrov, who've been orbiting the earth since July 1 and who on October 16 were informed that owing to a booster-rocket shortage back home they'd have to remain in space until next January. On October 23, the pair went on a space walk. Perhaps they were hitchhiking. In sports, the Toronto Blue Jays defeated the Philadelphia Phillies to win the World Series. Sports fans in Ozark, Alabama, showed up in large numbers at the town's football stadium to wager on a fast-moving Cow Dropping Match that has aroused the wrath of anti-gaming wowsers. Two cows are sent out to a football field arranged in numbered squares. Having laid bets on which of the squares a cow will defecate upon, the fans shout encouragement to their favorite animal. The money goes to charity and the excitement never quits or almost never. Senator Edward Kennedy's ill-starred nephew, Dr. William Kennedy Smith, was arrested in the wee hours of October 23 for brawling with a bouncer at the Bardo Rodeo Bar in Arlington, Virginia. It is an arrest that charity had enjoined us to pass over in silence until word arrived in our offices that the Senator, who shared his nephew's notoriety when their drinking habits were revealed during Dr. Smith's 1991 rape trial, opened his re-election bid with this bigoted outburst: "I may not yet know who my opponent is, but in the truest sense, we already know who our opponents are. They are the National Rifle Association, the radical right, the opponents of civil rights, all those who stand against health reform . . . the special interests and ideologues in so many fields who resist progress." Like public drunkenness, sexual harassment, general hypocrisy, deep-sixing one's date during an adulterous tryst—that kind of progress, Senator? The creep's spokesman, Mr. Paul Donovan, insisted that the Senator was not with Dr. Smith on the night of his most recent ignominy.

—RET

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Let's Hear It for the Boy

I look forward every month to the arrival of *TAS*. We currently receive only two periodicals at home, *TAS* and *World* (we have to get that since my wife is editor-and-publisher Joel Belz's sister!). I have noticed several times in *TAS* the use of "Boy" when referring to our current president and I have to admit that initially I was offended by that characterization. Even though I disagree with virtually everything Bill and Hillary stand for, I still felt that he should be respected as our president.

In reading the book of Isaiah this morning, however, I think I may have changed my mind. While it is true that the prophet wrote this 2,700 years ago about the nation of Israel, his words of prophecy for a people that had left the authority of God's word for more secular pursuits have a very familiar ring for us today:

> I will make their boys their officials; mere children will govern them. . . . Jerusalem staggers, Judah is falling; their words and deeds are against the Lord, defying his glorious presence. . . . Youths oppress my people, women rule over them. O my people, your guides lead you astray; they turn you from the path. . . . "What do you mean by crushing my people and grinding the faces of the poor?" declares the Lord, the Lord Almighty. (Isaiah 3:4, 8,12, 15)

I don't know if Isaiah was in any way the inspiration for the title "Boy President," but it certainly seems to fit!

—James L. Drexler
St. Louis, Missouri

Clarification

In my article "Gunning for Koresh" (*TAS*, August 1993), I reported that according to McLennan County Sheriff Jack Harwell "local television cameraman John McLemore" had, on the morning of February 28, 1993, "inadvertently tipped off" Branch Davidian David Jones about the impending ATF raid on the Mount Carmel Center. McLemore is not a cameraman. He is a reporter, for KWTX television in Waco. Harwell's sources were wrong, and I failed to uncover the error. It was not McLemore who unwittingly tipped off the Davidians on the morning of the raid. It was his KWTX colleague, cameraman Jim Peeler.

While the mix-up had no more than incidental significance for my story, it was of more than incidental significance to McLemore. I sincerely regret any embarrassment and anguish he had to endure because of this error.

I should add that I never regarded the unwitting media tipster as morally culpable for the ensuing gun battle. A convergence of humane instincts and rotten luck, I believed, had made the tipster an innocent instrument of disaster. While McLemore was not cursed with rotten luck on the morning of February 28, he did display extraordinary humaneness—and bravery—in removing wounded ATF agents from the scene of battle in his truck.

—Daniel Wattenberg
Washington, D.C.

By George!

I like your publication so much I read every word of it. Your October issue is no exception. In his review of A.N. Wilson's *The Rise and Fall of the House of Windsor*, Mr. Stuart Reid says the following: "The Royal family did not even pretend to be English until 1917, the year of Passchendaele, when, sensing that a gesture was called for, Edward VII changed the family name from Saxe-Coburg Gotha to Windsor . . ."

Fat chance of that happening, since, according to my *Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*, King Edward VII was already dead some seven years (1841-1910). I know the English can perform many great feats, but reviving the dead—kings included—is not one of them.

—Carl Shugaar
Washington, D.C.

. . . Mr. Reid also states that the Church of England forbids divorce. This is hard for me to believe, as the man who founded the Church of England, Henry VIII, divorced two women, Katherine of Aragon and Anne of Cleves.

—C. Dickerman Williams
Hamden, Connecticut

Stuart Reid replies:

Uh-oh. The name-change monarch was of course George V, a fact I learned at my father's knee. My apologies to Edward VII and to the readers of *TAS* for this momentary lapse of concentration. As for the divorce issue, it seems to prove my general point about the humbug surrounding the royal family and the Established Church.

RFK *v.* LBJ

Kenneth S. Lynn's assessment of Bobby Kennedy's less than charming personality agrees with my perception of Jack's alter-ego ("Bobby Kennedy's Crying Game," *TAS*, October 1993). An incident that occurred at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles in 1960 may help explain the long-standing antipathy between Bobby and LBJ. . . . One network, CBS, had the story and chose not to air it. I know the story. I was there.

Lyndon Johnson and Jack Kennedy had gone through a bitter nomination campaign that ended at the Sports Arena in Los Angeles with the nomination of Jack Kennedy. CBS, of course, covered the convention, and as part of CBS's effort a medical station was set up for the care of the reporters and technicians who worked there. I was, at the time, medical director for CBS and in charge of the station. We had lounges and a coffee machine, and the medical station became a hangout for the reporters. This is where I heard about the event.

After a bitter floor fight John Kennedy wrested the nomination away from favorite Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson of Texas. Immediately after the nomination was secure, Jack Kennedy, Bobby, Teddy, and their inner circle of advisers met to pick Jack's running mate. About 3:00 a.m. it was decided to pick Sen. Stuart Symington of Missouri as V.P. candidate. Bobby was dispatched to LBJ's suite to advise him of the choice and ask for his support. When Bobby broke the news, he was given a profane Texas tongue-lashing and told to go back to his brother and tell him that he, Lyndon Johnson, was going to be the V.P. candidate and that if he were not given the second slot, he would fight Jack all over the South. It was obvious that without a solid South, Kennedy had no possibility of winning the election.

Bobby carried the message back to

(continued on page 85)

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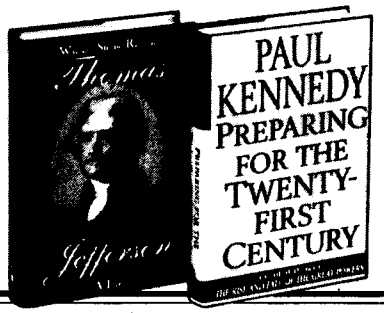

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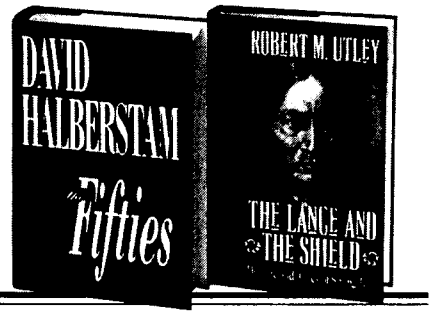

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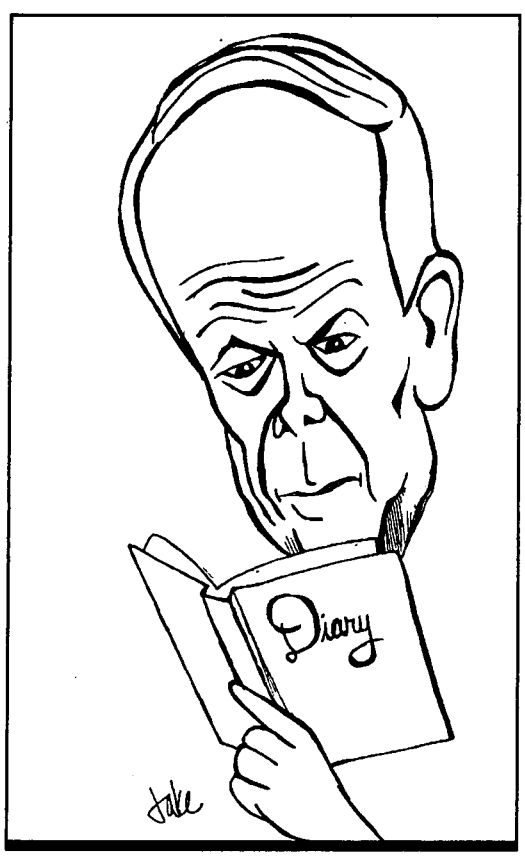
Senator Deadwood

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Senator Bob Packwood, the *Wall Street Journal* tells us, leads "a double life." He is one of the most powerful senators in this great city. His influence on health care and the North American free-trade pact is vast. Yet back home in progressive Oregon he travels by night to avoid the forces of moral and political uplift. Even in Washington he is scorned by those moral and intellectual colossi. On the historic night that President Bill Clinton delivered his health-care speech to Congress, Senator Packwood was a focus of awe, owing to his powerful position on the Senate Finance Committee. Yet a few blocks away, over at the Stewart Mott House, which is owned by "the wealthy liberal activist," other liberal activists gathered wearing "Goodbye Bob" buttons. And theirs was not a joyous bon voyage. They were really indignant, as these colossi usually are; but their indignation was directed at the kindly and progressive Bob.

Well, if we have seen it once we have seen it twice, and once was enough: the revolution devours its children. Senator Packwood in his long career has been a paragon of liberal Republicanism. He was for many years a Great Hope against Goldwaterism, Nixonism, and Reaganism. Women's issues have been a specialty with him, but also the whole Good Government agenda. He has been ardent on all the social issues, and he was a champion of legalized abortion back in the days when abortion was thought to be the work of Lucifer. The right-of-center American Conservative Union accords him a lowly rating of 33. And the progressive Americans for Democratic Action smiles on him with a 60. Now the senator's progressive past is screaming at him and flaunting those sour buttons. His problem is that he took his liberal cohorts at their word.

Up until a few years ago a major theme of the forward-lookers was sexual liberation, or at least a relaxation of America's squeamishness toward sex. Senator Packwood shared their hopes for, say, the Swedish approach to sexuality or maybe the Italian or perhaps the French. Well, at some point in the 1970s we got all three, and many Americans celebrated the sexual revolution with gusto. Senator Packwood was among the many celebrants, but times have changed. The liberal activists have placed other matters on their agenda and one is Senator Packwood's head. He should have recognized that Americans are not Europeans, or at least he should have had the good sense to have been a homosexual. More than two dozen women from the senator's past have complained that they were the recipients of unwanted attention from him. The complaints of some of these women come from many years ago.



In the days of the sexual revolution they would have been ignored or snickered at. Today the revolution is over, at least for heterosexuals, and the reaction has set in. That it is being led by "liberal activists" over at the Stewart Mott House should surprise no one. In this century there is no noble cause or liberal value that liberals have not gladly reversed themselves on, except for one. That one value is disturbing their neighbors. To disturb is to educate. It is the essence of art and maturity—so long as the disturber is a liberal. Other disturbers are viewed less favorably.

In the case of sex, the liberals

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Times *column syndicated by Creators Syndicate.*

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whenever and wherever trade barriers have been lowered, the participating economies have flourished. Through NAFTA we will most certainly see a boost to the economic vitality of the U.S., Canada and Mexico."

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applauded its spread. They were admirers of the free-speech movement. Soon salacious language was the mark of an enlightened mind. In art—or what passes for art—the notion of obscenity was hooted at. Sex for many liberals was until recently the highest form of recreation—even higher than chess. It was Therapy! Spirituality! Self-Awareness! Now it is Brutality. Ignominy. And Very Embarrassing. Well, Senator Packwood, consistency has not been a liberal value for a long time.

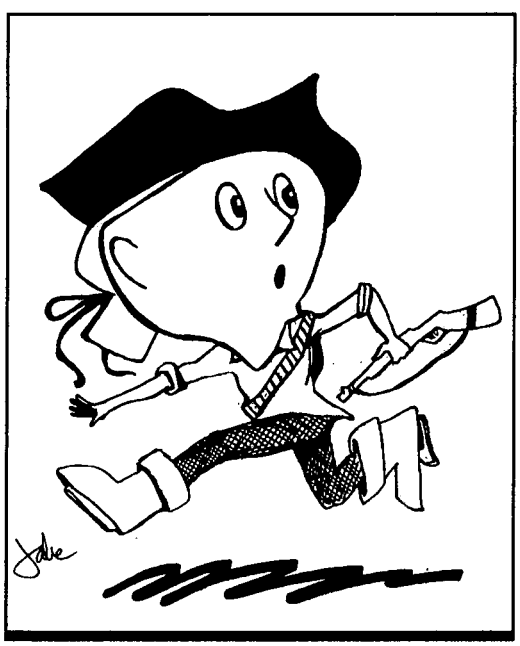
Senator Packwood has, of course, apologized for his past. American public figures are very good at public apologies. After all, in their lives words mean so little. He has spent two days testifying in private before the Senate ethics committee where, doubtless, more words were wasted. Soon we should hear whether his colleagues intend to hold public hearings. That is what "liberal activists" want. I do, too, but for a different reason. The activists believe that Senator Packwood will be revealed as a cad and—who knows—perhaps worse. I believe the activists will be revealed as public nuisances and a threat to the very liberal tradition they claim to espouse. That is for the good. America's liberal tradition was of value when it was under the stewardship of liberals. ❐

Mascot Studies

The American university is not a happy place. It is supposed to be an incubator of higher learning, abundant with frisky young people and cultured profs. Actually many of the young people are quite grim. Both profs and students live in fear of the thought patrols. And the entire institution is at the mercy of malcontents and quacks. The chief business of a university is supposed to embrace study and, among select professors, research. Nowadays, these pursuits are frequently disrupted by the ongoing campaigns of so-called feminists and other axe-grinders. Learning is subordinated to reform.

Consider this. At Auburn University, the Politically Correct have waged a campaign to replace the school's "Senator" mascot, because it struck the moron element as racist and sexist and resembled to them—a "white plantation owner." At the University of Alabama at Birmingham, the Politically Correct succeeded in banishing that school's mascot, too. It was a distinctly comic Norseman, but again the morons triumphed, objecting that the Norseman was "too masculine to represent female students." University officials had spent two years and $20,000 to develop it, but according to the university's sports information director, "he (the Norseman) was—I hate to use the word—too Aryan—some people objected—because it was too white, or too male, or too violent or scared little children."

Then we have the controversy at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. There the Politically Correct have insisted that the school's mascot is "racist, sexist, and promoted violence." They might also object that the mascot is treasonous, anti-monarch, and anti-British, for the shocking mascot is the Minuteman, the colonial militiaman standing ready to resist the Redcoats at a minute's notice. There are hundreds of similar controversies rumbling through American universities today, and all are taken with the utmost seriousness. What does it tell us?



For one thing it tells us that protest and demonstration have become major themes of American life. Truth be known, most of the old injustices are defunct. There is no more government-sanctioned segregation, though some minority members wish to segregate themselves. There are no controversial wars. We have been through our sexual revolution, personal liberations, and the drug experience, most of which came out unhappily. But the role model of the protester and reformer have gained eminence in American legend; and so now many vicarious Martin Luther Kings and Eleanor Roosevelts lust for their moment in history.

At our universities, neither professors nor administrators apparently possess the discernment to distinguish between a harmless mascot and, say, a flaming cross on a hill. They have filled their campuses with intellectually lazy people who are bored by books and always ready for some soul-searching debate or gaudy march. They would all be better off guzzling beer and cheering the local mud wrestlers.

There is today on campus—and for that matter throughout much of American life—an innocent assumption that any protester must have a point. We have quite forgotten that familiar figure of the past, the malcontent. Past generations recognized these odious cranks when they commenced to bawl and took them *cum grano salis.* If by accident the malcontent had come upon a legitimate grievance, fine—the Republic initiated a reform and passed on. Today the country is at the mercy of these disturbed people, and actually raises many to lifelong prominence. Think of Jesse Jackson or Ralph Nader. Is there any legitimate reform associated with Jackson's name that Martin Luther King did not set in motion years before? Nader may have done slightly better for the commonweal, but surely a review of his decades of gripes reveals little that has been constructive. Worse, these grumblers have inspired thousands of common malcontents to take up a noble cause. Vexed debate over the campus mascot is but one of the unhappy consequences. ❐

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Exporting Famine

by Tom Bethell

Several months ago, the *Village Voice* carried an unusual story about Somalia on its cover: "The Famine Food Created," by Michael Maren. In October he spoke at the Cato Institute, his talk billed as "Good Intentions Gone Awry." I decided to find out what he had to say.

He turned out to be a quietly spoken man of 37 who over the years has worked for the Peace Corps, Catholic Relief Services, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. He has spent time in India, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, and to say that he had become disillusioned about food aid would be putting it mildly.

His message was shocking and newsworthy, but almost wholly neglected by the U.S. news media: the free food that year after year is dumped in these African countries undermines the local agriculture and so causes famines when rainfall is below normal. The famine in Somalia was caused by the food that for years had been unloaded at the docks of Mogadishu. "Food is killing people, and that must stop," Maren said.

Somalia has enough arable land to feed itself even in the worst drought, he said. Briefly, in 1987, Somalia actually exported food. The country has no "population problem." It has a total of 6 million people in a country the size of Texas. The problem is that free food undermines the market for locally grown food.

On January 13 there was an article on the subject by Alison Mitchell in the *New York Times*, but I think it was the only one they published this year. Here is how it began:

> GENALE, SOMALIA—In this country of hunger, Faadumi Abdi Arush is cursed with corn. She has corn stored away in barrels, corn stacked in sacks, corn to be tossed away as chicken feed. Mrs. Arush survived Somalia's civil war, and she and the farm hands on her large holding even managed to tend her fields, producing a bountiful harvest of corn four months ago.
>
> But when she took her crop to the market, she found that the infusion of food from relief agencies was cutting demand. With food prices falling in a bottomless tumble, no merchant wanted to risk buying her corn and then see the prices tumble still lower, she said. "Nobody is interested," said the slender 52-year-old farmer, pointing in exasperation to the piles of corn already gone bad that had been thrown on a tarpaulin for chicken feed. "Everybody has his own relief supply."
>
> This is the paradox of famine and famine relief. The international charity that stopped starvation eventually can become a problem in itself, threatening to destroy what little remains of the local farm economy.

Mitchell went on to note that the price of rice in Somalia was said to be the lowest in the world, having fallen to $5 for a 110-lb. bag—less than half the price in the U.S. She added that "some relief agencies are starting to fear that the relief food will now cause another cycle of dependency by depressing the food market and making it unprofitable for farmers to farm." The principal relief agencies are CARE, Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, and Save the Children. Says Willet Weeks of Save the Children: "Prolonging free food distribution as the need is diminishing is a sure recipe for prolonging the famine."

To understand the problem that food creates, it is necessary to go back in time before the emergency arises. Most food aid—about 90 percent of it—is distributed in places where there is no famine and, of course, where there are no reporters or TV cameras. This is the invisible part of the exercise, and the crucial part. It is here that native self-sufficiency is undermined, day by day. This is happening in many countries in Africa right now: for example, Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Togo, and Ghana.

And no doubt many more. These are simply the countries that Maren reeled off when I asked him to name the countries where free, non-emergency food is being distributed. In any given country, Maren told me, CARE or Catholic Relief Services or World Vision have routine programs: "School feeding programs, where they give food to children; mother-child health programs, where they give food to women with kids at clinics; and food-for-work programs, where they dump food on people for digging holes, things like that: digging wells, building roads." These projects tend to be make-work. Maren identifies one going on in Mogadishu right now: "Food-for-work consists of giving people empty garbage bags and then trading a bag of food for a bag of trash." This is doomed to turn into a scavenging exercise, he says, "with people looting garbage trucks as they once looted food convoys."

Meanwhile, in Somalia, as in other countries not yet known to the media or "the international community," local agriculture and self-sufficiency is undermined, sack by free sack. Once there is a drought or a civil war in which the normal channels of food distribution are disrupted, there is likely to be a famine. Then the relief organizations will telephone their friends in the news media and show up with more food—this time in a true emergency. The television crews will get the starving-children footage they need to make the evening news. And the relief organizations will be depicted in a very favorable light, alleviating on camera the starvation

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent.*

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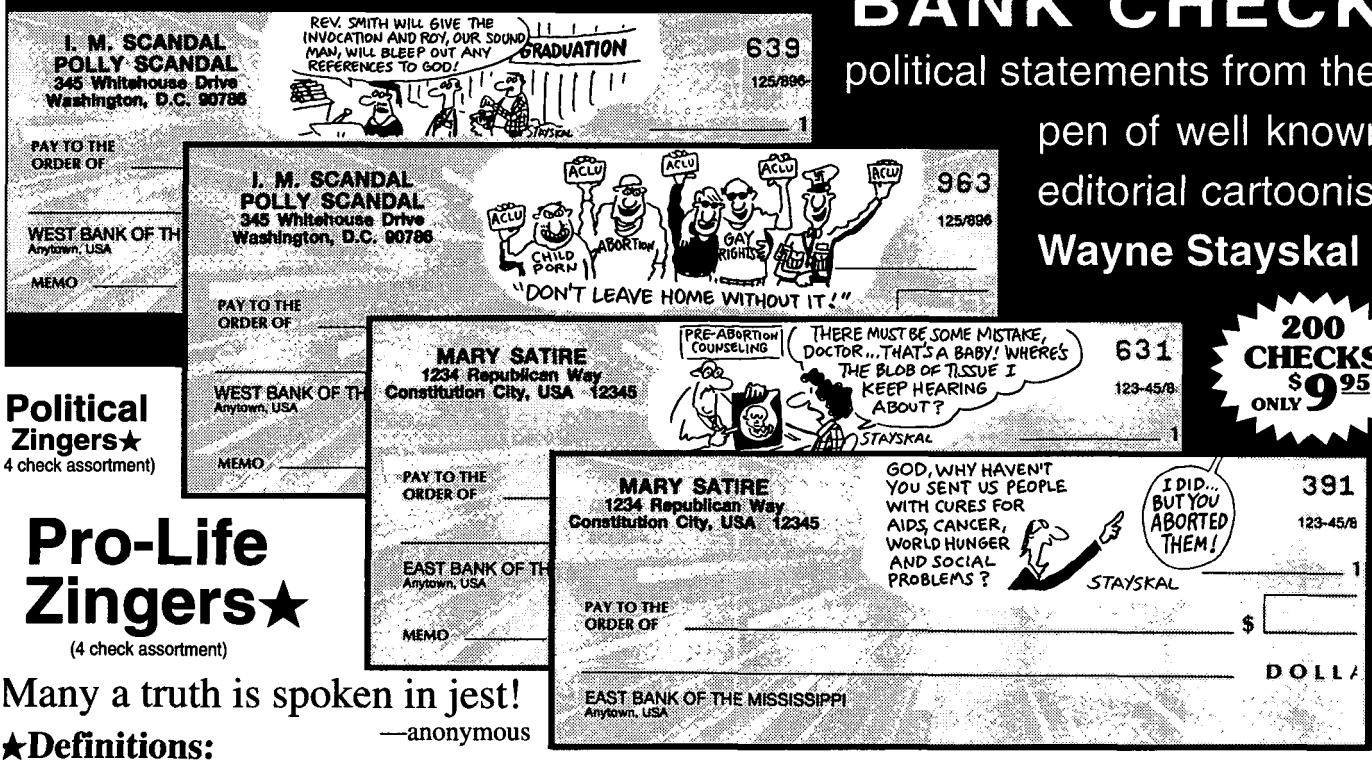
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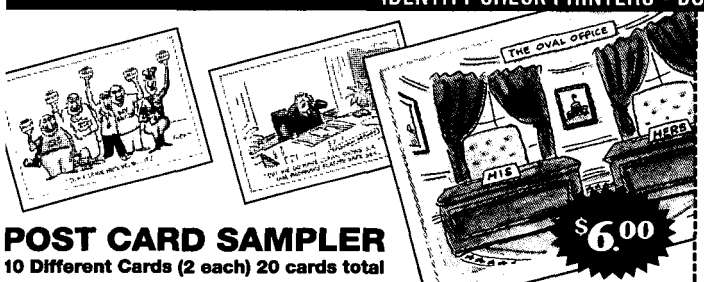

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that their earlier off-camera efforts had helped cause.

Maren points out that news organizations are likely to be dependent on the relief agencies when they arrive in a new famine area for the first time. In March, Maren gave a speech to the Camel Breeders, a group of Cornell University graduate students who are preparing to work in international development. The speech was reprinted in *Harper's* in August. Here's an excerpt:

> Historically, the press has been willing to uncritically accept whatever image of Africa the western vanguard has been selling. In the case of the PVOs [private voluntary organizations, such as CARE] the press has bought their line because reporters are as dependent on aid organizations as the organizations are on them. It would have been impossible, for example, for the press to cover Somalia without the assistance of PVOs. There's no Hertz counter at the Mogadishu airport and no road maps available at gas stations. If a journalist arrives in Africa from Europe or the United States and needs to get to the interior of the country, PVOs are the only ticket. Journalists sleep and eat with PVO workers. When they want history and facts and figures, they turn to the PVOs. In press coverage of Somalia or almost any other crisis in Africa, it is always the PVOs who are most often quoted and are regarded as the neutral and authoritative sources—as if they have no vested interest in anything but the truth.

Where do these organizations get the food that they give away? Mostly from the U.S. and Canadian governments, and from the European Community. Farm price supports generate food surpluses in Western Europe and North America, which then pile up in storage depots. In the Eisenhower years it dawned on someone that giving the food to foreigners would rid us of embarrassing surpluses and perhaps even give foreigners reason to love the Yanks for a change. Shipping interests got into the act. If the (unionized) price was right, they'd be happy to ship grain from Port Arthur to wherever. So it was agreed that half the food would be transported in U.S.-flagged ships. Thus Public Law 480 was born—Food for Peace. It has turned out to be one of the more conspicuously harmful components of the U.S. foreign aid program. About half of the food aid worldwide comes from the U.S.—about $1 billion worth a year. It gives new meaning to the phrase "global economy."

Because of price supports, too much food is grown here. It is shipped abroad, and as a result too little food is grown there. Next there are famines. Pictures are shown on television, and the man in the White House feels compassionate. He sends a military escort to ensure that the food gets delivered. Some of the soldiers are killed and they in turn are shipped back to the U.S. Food for Peace began in 1954 but it didn't really get going until the 1960s. At that point Africa was still self-sufficient in food production. This April the *Economist* noted:

> Each year throughout the 1980s, western donors spent $1 billion shipping millions of tons of food to the hungry in Africa. It saved many lives. Yet by the end of the decade the proportion of African children who weighed too little because they ate too little increased. And the amount of food that Africans grew per person fell. Africans began to ask: Is food aid part of the problem?

In a 1984 article in the *Wall Street Journal* ("Free Food Bankrupts Foreign Farmers"), James Bovard pointed out that "per capita food production in Africa has decreased 20 percent since 1960, and PL 480 donations have helped governments perpetuate the destructive status quo." Aid officials try to argue that giving Africans wheat doesn't discourage the local production of sorghum—as though the provision of one form of grain doesn't discourage the production of another. As Bovard put it, if the Department of Agriculture really believed that giving away food has no effect on local farmers, presumably the Secretary of Agriculture wouldn't mind "if the European Economic Community sent over a billion pounds of cheese to feed all the hungry Americans they hear about." Our farmers have the clout to prevent such shipments. But the free food we send abroad goes to countries where the farmers are politically powerless. And the never-ending stream of food keeps them that way. Agencies such as CARE and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are in effect government contractors and should be viewed as such.

Illustrating the point, Maren (when I spoke to him later) pulled out a copy of CARE's annual report at random. In 1986, CARE's total revenues were $401 million, 65 percent of which were agricultural commodities and ocean freight donated by governments. For CRS, that percentage is higher—between 80 and 90 percent, Maren estimated. The dominant incentive for these groups is to sign up as many people as possible for free food. They "fight like Coke and Pepsi" to expand their share of the donated food: their jobs depend on it.

A "crystal moment" in Maren's career came when he was working with CRS "in a famine situation in northwest Kenya." At a meeting in Nairobi, an American woman with CRS stood up and said: "We have to take advantage of this famine to expand our regular program." Keep 'em hooked, in other words. "When I'd return to Nairobi every few weeks," Maren told his Cornell audience, "my boss . . . had only one question: How many more recipients did you sign on? More recipients meant more government grant money, which meant we could buy more vehicles and hire more assistants."

It's interesting that this is a story about the dangers of subverting markets, yet it has been told almost exclusively by the left. Maren himself comes from a leftist background. For years now the left has been issuing warnings about the problems caused by food-dumping in the Third World. Frances Moore Lappe writes about it. The aid literature is full of it. The BBC broadcasts it (Maren can get on British but not American television). Conservatives seem to have overlooked the argument almost completely. P.T. Bauer, a leading critic of foreign aid, missed it, and I am not aware that Milton Friedman has written about it, although it intensifies his claim that there is no such thing as a free lunch: when they do exist, free lunches may well be harmful to your (future) health.

Maren and Bovard think the explanation is that leftists are more likely to be out there in the field. They know what's going on. Conservatives don't really believe in "development" anyway, and aren't too excited about one more story of good intentions gone sour. They can point to the moral—doing good with other people's money is likely to do harm—but they don't have the facts (and typically aren't interested in reporting either, which is why there are so few conservative journalists). Leftists have the facts, but of course they shrink from the moral. Maren is one who does not. ❐

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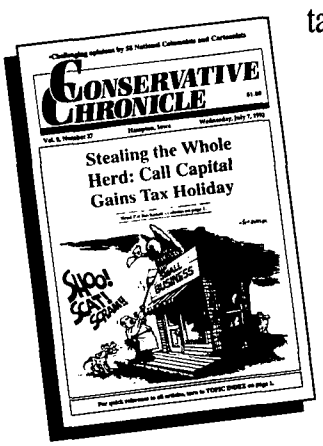

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Books for Christmas

Our annual list of holiday gift suggestions from distinguished readers and writers.

LAMAR ALEXANDER

All the King's Men, by Robert Penn Warren. For the person who gets to thinking he or she knows something about politics or about writing, this will bring you down to earth.

Abraham Lincoln: A Biography, by Benjamin P. Thomas. "In 268 words he gave us a chart and a compass . . . demonstrating that our nation's strength lies in rededication to those beliefs to which it was committed at birth." Timely advice. The best short biography of Lincoln.

The Discoverers, by Daniel Boorstin. For mold-breakers. When I was governor, trying to make schools better, I read a chapter each night. "The enemy of discovery is the profession." Boorstin is the best teacher today of the idea of America.

A Death in the Family, by James Agee. Just about the best writing you can ever find about what it is like to sit on a porch in the warm evenings laughing and smelling the hoses spraying the lawn and watching the children put fireflies in jars. Just about the best writing, period.

Pat Nixon: The Untold Story, by Julie Nixon Eisenhower. Especially for Nixon fans (I am one), especially this year. "Oh, no thank you, Judy, I have to do things for myself. I tell my girls that if you become dependent on others and let them do everything for you, you become ugly."

Bridge to the Sun, by Gwen Terasaki. A Tennessee girl falls in love with a Japanese diplomat just before Pearl Harbor, marries him, is deported, and lives in the mountains of Japan during World War II.

Six Months Off: An American Family's Australian Adventure, by Lamar Alexander. I like to read it because it is about our family.

Crackers, by Roy Blount, Jr. About the Carters, but it could be the Clintons: "I've got the red neck White House blues/Jimmy's (Billy's) got me all confused/He's in all the right churches and all the wrong pews/I've got the red neck White House blues."

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Roots, by Alex Haley. Admit it. You've watched it but never read it. See if you don't sit up straight when slave traders snatch Kunta Kinte from the canebrake. Every family's struggle for freedom.

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day, by Judith Viorst. Bedtime reading. For your grandchild, your legislator, or yourself. We all have these days—often during holidays: "I think I'll move to Australia."

Lamar Alexander is the former governor of Tennessee and the former secretary of education.

DICK ARMEY

My Christmas book list features some old favorites in addition to some new releases:

Bill Buckley's *Happy Days Were Here Again*. Bill's books are such a joy because they represent a true distillation of the natural wit and good humor of conservatives. They're also a tour de force from the conservative mind we've come to rely on for forty years.

Bob Bartley's *The Seven Fat Years*. I can't stress enough the importance of understanding the Reagan years. In addition to belying the Democrats' economic revisionism, Bartley's book will become a history text of the "good old days" for Americans who will look back on the eighties with awe, reverence, and longing during the Clinton years.

Thomas Sowell's *A Conflict of Visions*. This book, perhaps more than any other, describes just how real are the differences between the two primary political philosophies in America today, conservatism and liberalism. It's particularly appropriate, given the eerie similarities between the Democrat Congress and the unconstrained visionaries Sowell discusses.

Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. I particularly encourage those with friends, relatives, and acquaintances working in positions of authority in the national Democrat party to give them this gift.

Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*. This would be a wonderful gift for anyone who hopes to preserve the thinking of this great economist who, I'm sad to say, passed away this year, just when we need him most.

William Safire's *Lend Me Your Ears*. A wonderful collection of some of history's finest speeches.

Dick Armey is the U.S. representative from Texas's 26th district and chairman of the House Republican Conference.

MICHAEL BARONE

For those to whom I have not already given it, Conor Cruise O'Brien's *The Great Melody: A Thematic Biography of Edmund Burke*. An old man's book, the product of a lifetime of learning and action, written with the passion of a man determined to pass on his wisdom and insight. O'Brien's Burke is just as passionate, determined to honor tradition and to pursue justice.

Drew McCoy, *The Last of the Fathers: James Madison and the Republican Legacy*, and William Lee Miller, *The Business of May Next: James Madison and the Founding*. McCoy shows Madison looking back on his long public life from old age (he lived to be 85); Miller shows him methodically studying republicanism in 1786, when he was 35, in preparation for the Constitutional Convention he did more than anyone else to engineer. From their accounts, Madison emerges as a vivid figure, with a passion for both liberty and order.

Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, the classic work on Yugoslavia, which shows that this is a country one never wants to invade. Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*, which is a superb introduction to Russian political culture as well as a narrative of the revolutions of 1917. Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Ancien Régime and the French Revolution*, a wonderful study of France from the bottom up, showing that centralization preceded 1789 and that what the revolutionaries added was dedication to abstract principles over tradition. James Q. Wilson's *The Moral Sense* uses social science to uphold ordinary people's common sense.

Finally, an obscure find from a used book store: H.C. Foxcroft, *A Character of the Trimmer, Being a Short Life of the First Marquis of Halifax*. I found the seventeenth-century politics obscure, but Halifax, always trimming between devotion to principles of hierarchy and right, is a sympathetic figure, and his letters, copiously quoted, are written in a straightforward seventeenth-century prose that rings clear as a crystal wine glass.

Michael Barone is a senior writer at U.S. News & World Report.

JACQUES BARZUN

George Kennan, *Around the Cragged Hill*. The veteran diplomat and doyen of foreign-policy scholars has written an intimate account of his long-matured conclusions about the place of the United States in the world, the role it should play henceforth, and the improvement of the means to that end. Criticism of our habits and attitudes and of some of our institutions is matched by sympathetic understanding of difficulties and imaginative suggestions of reform. The book is a *testament politique* of immediate and permanent interest, written in prose of a quality one rarely meets in current books.

Raphael Patai, *The Arab Mind*. This fat tome is worth reading for its scope and detail as well as for its balanced judgments. All respects of "mind" are covered, from religion, history, and sexuality to politics, language, and the arts. The tone is not that of apology, much less of propaganda; indeed, the text relies on such a variety of opinions from historians, statesmen, publicists, and men of letters that one readily excuses the author's repetition of summarizing

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propositions. This iteration serves as an aid to memory about a complex and unfamiliar subject.

Richard Bulliet, *The Sufi Fiddle*. Another, but very different, venture into Islam forms the plot of this thriller by the Professor of Middle East History at Columbia University. The fiddle is a violin with a strange Arabic inscription inside it, which becomes the center of wild events caused by a "fiddle" in the slang sense. Islamic lore and mysterious Eastern characters interact with attractive Americans in the pursuit of the instrument from New York and Boston to remote spots in Oman. The story has wit, salacity, and the fantastic in equal amounts; be ready to leave your reason on the shelf when you take down the book.

Louis B. Lundborg, *The Art of Being an Executive*. The literature of business management consists mainly of platitudes concealed by jargon and of statistical reports about imaginary entities—all this in the service of "strategic planning" and the like. So it is a surprise to find the former chairman of the Bank of America writing about situations in which actual human beings and clear predicaments are dealt with by a shrewd and experienced mind. Description and advice are given in good, racy American English.

Joseph Epstein, *Pertinent Players*. The editor of the *American Scholar* set out a dozen years ago to revive the literary essay, a genre distinct from the "critical piece" that fills our quarterlies from coast to coast. In the literary essay the writer—Hazlitt is the great exemplar—does not pounce on symptoms and issue a diagnostician's verdict, but lets his experience of life and books play upon and around his subject—quite as if he liked reading and esteemed his author. Here the figures range from Hazlitt himself and Henry James to Mencken, Orwell, and H.W. Fowler—a treat for true readers.

Jacques Barzun is University Professor Emeritus at Columbia University and the author of many books, including The American University: How It Runs, Where It Is Going, *published this year in a second edition by the University of Chicago Press.*

DAVID BROCK

I thought I would start by recommending three books by younger writers. The fascism of today's women's movement is exposed in Katie Roiphe's *The Morning After: Sex, Fear and Feminism on Campus*. The concluding chapter is a marvelous critique of my friend and mentor, the "anti-porn star" Catharine MacKinnon.

Spectator readers won't be surprised to learn that Michael Fumento has followed *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS* with a new book elucidating the blatant politicization of science by both the scientific and media establishments, *Science Under Siege*. And John Podhoretz's *Hell of a Ride: Backstage at the White House Follies 1989-1993* provides a more detailed sense of life in contemporary Washington than a dozen books by bigfoot political reporters.

Roiphe should be read alongside Camille Paglia's *Sex, Art and American Culture*, a book of essays published in paperback last year. The text of Paglia's public lecture at MIT, in which she insults the intelligence, competence, and physical attributes of various women writers, is worth many times the cover price. Naomi Wolf is "Little Miss Pravda." Of Susan Sontag, Paglia wonders, "I don't know what the hell she's been doing for twenty years."

I couldn't think of a syndicated columnist whose pieces from five years ago would be both highly instructive and pleasurable on rereading—until I was surprised by William F. Buckley, Jr.'s *Happy Days Were Here Again: Reflections of a Libertarian Journalist*. Buckley has a rare gift among pundits for producing memorable pieces that are not attacking, but rather appreciating—luminaries ranging from Sidney Hook to Malcolm Forbes to Nancy and Ronald Reagan.

I don't read much new fiction, but Dominick Dunne's *A Season in Purgatory*, consumed in one thoroughly enjoyable sitting, does a better job of defining the pathologies of the Kennedy clan than any biographer to date.

If you do nothing else, hunt down a copy of Jean-François Revel's *The Flight From Truth: The Reign of Deceit in the Age of Information*. My literary agent recommended it highly when it was published two years ago in translation from the French. I recently read it again, following my peculiar experiences publishing my own book this spring. It is simply the best exegesis I have seen of how our political culture is set, to the detriment of both the truth and democracy.

David Brock is the author of The Real Anita Hill *(Free Press) and an investigative writer for* The American Spectator.

RICHARD BROOKHISER

You've probably never read any James Fenimore Cooper, unless you were an American lit major, and even then, you'd have to be pretty old. More likely, you saw the movie of *The Last of the Mohicans*, starring Daniel Day-Lewis and his hair. Now, after the ages of innocence and irony, try *The Leatherstocking Tales*.

Cooper's great enemy over the years has been Mark Twain. When the movie came out, none of the reviewers had read the books, not even John Simon, though most of them seemed to know Twain's rollicking attack. Most of Twain's gripes are true, and all of them are beside the point. You can read Cooper as a page-turner; you can read him as a mythmaker (every cop-buddy show descends from him). You can even read *The Pioneers* as social observation, the ancestor of early James. Most important, you can read him for a somber vision of a world of transgressions and selfishness, through which the only pathfinder is character.

Richard Brookhiser is a senior editor of National Review *and the author of* The Way of the WASP: How It Made America and How It Can Save It, So to Speak *(Free Press).*

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RICHARD W. CARLSON

I came across a book about General Custer and the Big Horn Campaign called *Son of the Morning Star* (1984), and it is well worth reading. Evan S. Connell (*Mrs. Bridge*, *The Diary of a Rapist*) is a fine writer. He offers up a fascinating portrait of the American West 125 years ago and a fair and balanced picture of handsome, brave, weird, egomaniacal, and wildly aggressive George Custer, Civil War hero, poster boy, and presidential aspirant, whose death horrified our nation of 40 million. Connell's account of the events leading to the slaughter of Custer and his 7th cavalrymen by an enormous encampment of Cheyenne, Sioux, Sans Arc, and Oglala Indians underscores the dramatic and colorful lives of troopers, and their names alone make you want to read about them—men like Many Lice, Hump Nose, Rectum (well, I don't know about Rectum), and Chased-by-Owls are well worth knowing, and Connell makes them come alive.

Jonathan Yardley is one of my favorite newspaper writers and book reviewers. His recent column in the *Washington Post* about *Come Here: A Man Overcomes the Tragic Aftermath of Childhood Sexual Abuse* was smart, incisive, very critical, and took a lot of guts, since the author, former American University president Richard Berendzen, is a media groupie of considerable social skill and has many influential friends in the town Yardley writes for. You may recall that Berendzen made serial obscene calls to women and, when he was caught, offered up the New Age mea culpa of the Judge Wachtlers of America by blaming others, in Berendzen's case his own mother, for making him do it. Yardley sliced him up and packaged him.

Yardley's considerable skill with prose caused me to order a book he wrote in 1989 called *Our Kind of People: The Story of an American Family*. It is a fine and honest look at the fifty-year marriage of Yardley's own parents and the passing of an age dominated by WASP families—many of them well-mannered, literate, genteel, selfless, and often kindly—whose contributions to America have disappeared from collective appreciation.

I include the next book with trepidation, as I suspect Bob Tyrrell thinks all dog-lovers, or even dog-likers, read the *Nation*. The fact is that my angst-ridden Springer Spaniel pressured me to list *The Hidden Life of Dogs* by Elizabeth Thomas. This title is not some clever hippie metaphor like *Zen & the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* but actually means what it says. In this slim volume, Thomas brings anthropomorphism to new and interesting heights. To paraphrase Freud, who was speaking of another group every bit as mysterious in their thinking, "What is it that dogs want anyway?" This readable book answers that stumper.

Let me mention a couple of other books, neither new, that I've enjoyed recently. *The Brownsville Raid* (just reissued by Texas A&M University Press) is by John Weaver, an old friend of mine who has been engaged in good writing full-time for fifty-three years. This is a first-rate historic detective story. Weaver's study of the treatment of the all-Negro 25th Infantry Regiment in Brownsville, Texas, at the turn of the century caused the soldiers to be posthumously rescued from dishonor in a case clearly driven by the racism of the times.

Lamar Alexander's *Six Months Off* is a good tale of a different sort. Lamar, former secretary of education, was not only a very competent politician but actually writes well. This is the story of a pol who deduces there is more to life than being governor of Tennessee and takes his wife Honey and their four kids off to Australia for six months to get reacquainted. It is touching and funny.

I can't relinquish this space without advancing a proposal. Consider sending a copy of the smarmiest novel of this decade so far, *The Bridges of Madison County*, and the accompanying cassette of its author singing, to someone you really hate. This book, by one Robert James Waller, a Jimmy Carter look-alike, has American women by the millions all atwitter for reasons not fathomed but well worth exploring by those more qualified. This is the story, written in a self-conscious, almost juvenile, and manipulative style—with a hint of what sounds like homosexual envy to it—of a middle-aged housewife's affair of four days. This is not ordinary couch-ball Francesca Johnson and Robert Kincaid are playing here, but an event Waller elevates to spiritual heights. The maddening Robert Kincaid (always called by his full name by the author) drives a truck named Fred, plays a guitar named Luke, keeps a dog named Smokey, and uses a penis named Mr. Willie . . . well, you get the drift.

Richard W. Carlson is president and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. →

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FRANK J. FAHRENKOPF, Jr.

Lenin's Tomb, by David Remnick. Recent events make this important book more relevant and informative today. Yeltsin, Gorbachev, and Sakharov up close and personal.

Without Remorse, by Tom Clancy. Outstanding action novel—you won't be able to put it down.

Mad as Hell: Revolt at the Ballot Box 1992, by Jack W. Germond and Jules Witcover. An inside look at how Clinton won and Bush blew the 1992 presidential election.

Mornings on Horseback, by David McCullough. An old favorite—Teddy Roosevelt and the politics of "The Age of Innocence."

Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr. is the former chairman of the Republican National Committee.

EDWIN J. FEULNER, Jr.

Margaret Thatcher's *The Downing Street Years*. I have had a "sneak preview" of the Iron Lady's first volume of memoirs and they are a spectacular read, gutsy and opinionated, unlike so many other political memoirs. She tells it like she sees it, and since the way she sees it is so congenial to my own outlook, this is my number-one pick for this Christmas.

Conor Cruise O'Brien's *The Great Melody* is O'Brien's beautiful prose at its best, celebrating one of every conservative's real heroes, Edmund Burke.

Friedrich A. von Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom*. As we approach the fiftieth anniversary of Hayek's demolition job on socialism, it remains one of the best reads around.

Russell Kirk's *The Conservative Mind*. Another anniversary—this time forty years—and celebration of the eighth edition of Kirk's magnum opus reminds us of the everlasting verities.

Brian Crozier's *Free Agent: The Unseen War 1941-1991*. Crozier's autobiography gives us some masterful insights into the Cold War from the perspective of a "good spook." Crozier's role—both official and unofficial—on both sides of the Atlantic as linguist, analyst, and above all strategic thinker deserves telling to a much wider audience and he does it in a chipper and clear-cut way.

Edwin J. Feulner, Jr. is president of the Heritage Foundation.

SUZANNE FIELDS

True Grit, by Charles Portis. An American classic, a tale of a 14-year-old girl's toughness, character, and derring-do on the Arkansas frontier, circa 1880; incontrovertible proof that Bill Clinton is an anomaly.

Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought, by Jean Bethke Elshtain. A fresh and tough-minded critical analysis of feminism with gems of insight: "Strangely, few feminists have couched their political vision in terms of what it means to be an 'American' or a 'citizen' save . . . 'How to get yours.' Where is a feminist analogue of Dr. King's 'I Have a Dream'? In whose behalf is the feminist dream being dreamt?"

The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and Its History, by Leo Brady. A brilliant scholarly discussion of celebrity tracing the idea of the hero from Homer to Hemingway, from Joan of Arc to John Lennon, from religious icons to the modern media: "Many seek fame because they believe it confers a reality that they lack."

Southern Ladies and Gentlemen, by Florence King. A riotous, ribald translation of the morals and mores of the South that tells us more about the colorful natives and their funny ways than they ever wanted us to know.

Sonnets, by William Shakespeare. A keen reminder of the power of passion when it's fused with the language of love: "So are you to my thoughts as food to life,/Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground . . ."

Suzanne Fields is a Washington Times *columnist.*

JAMES GRANT

"'The pleasant thing about fighting with the Spaniards, Mr. Ellis,' said Jack, smiling at his great round eyes and solemn face, 'is not that they are shy, for they are not, but that they are never, never ready.'" So writes Patrick O'Brian in *Master and Commander*, the first of the Aubrey-Maturin novels. The stories are set in the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic wars; Jack Aubrey is a fighting captain (and violist), and Stephen Maturin is a naval surgeon (and cellist). I have read a dozen of them and am hoarding the last three or four against the possibility of a long illness or incarceration. Incredibly, O'Brian seems to hold the same high opinion of his readers as they do of him. Not only is he the master and commander of the English language, but also of character, dialogue, plot, and humor. Although he almost never stops to explain the nomenclature of sail and seamanship, it doesn't matter to me (nor indeed to any other O'Brian fan I have ever talked to, whether seagoing or landlubbing). The reader is swept along by the beauty and precision of the language that he does understand.

So richly does O'Brian evoke the late eighteenth century that I returned to the great Edmund Burke, an old college flame. It is an astounding fact of history that the American Revolution proceeded despite Burke and his compelling "Speech on Conciliation with America." Perhaps political oratory is overrated after all. Bill Clinton, at least, must devoutly hope so.

James Grant's latest book is Minding Mr. Market: Ten Years on Wall Street with Grant's Interest Rate Observer *(Farrar, Straus & Giroux).*

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DAVID HALBERSTAM

David Remnick, *Lenin's Tomb*, an extraordinary book by an uncommonly gifted young writer on the last days of the Soviet Empire and the painful birth of the new Russia. Among other things, Remnick writes brilliantly about what happens to a country when totalitarianism causes it to destroy its own historical record. The ideal book to go with today's headlines.

Richard Ben Cramer, *What It Takes*, the story of six men running for the presidency. The best political reportage of its kind I've ever seen. It is not easy to write about men like Bush, Dole, Dukakis, and Hart and turn it into hypnotic reading, but Cramer does it. The passage on Bob Dole's recovery from his war wounds alone is worth the price of the book.

Hal Moore and Joseph Galloway, *We Were Soldiers Once . . . And Young*. The story of the battle of the Ia Drang Valley, the first great main force battle of the Vietnam war, fought in November 1965, when both sides defined themselves and the NVA learned how to combat America's great technological superiority. Hal Moore commanded the American battalion that fought there and Joe Galloway reported on it for UP. This is an eloquent, indeed poetic, report on young men in battle; it is better, I've come to think, than *The Red Badge of Courage*. My admiration for it knows no bounds.

Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels*. A brilliant novel about the battle of Gettysburg, from which the current film has been made. I am not a Civil War buff, but it had the absolute ring of truth—a haunting beauty to it. Read *We Were Soldiers* first and then follow it with *Killer Angels*. Then watch the Ken Burns series on the Civil War.

Richard Price, *Clockers*. A novel about the black gangs of the underclass. If there has ever been a book that deserved a greater popular response, this is it.

David Halberstam's most recent book is The Fifties.

HUGH HEWITT

Walter McDougall's *Let the Sea Make a Noise . . .* is history in a grand style—the story of the scramble to control the North Pacific, now entering its seventh century. It deserves to be read and enjoyed by a wide audience. McDougall's work will be best understood, though, if preceded by a reading or rereading of Churchill's *History of the English Speaking People*. This four-volume set is widely available, and is the perfect antidote to contemporary secondary education's refusal to provide any structure to history for fear of giving offense. Churchill begins with Caesar gazing out over the Channel, and wraps up just before the Great War. The century's greatest man writes history that thunders and rolls. Great stuff.

More recently, Larry Woiwode's *Acts* is a serious writer's serious attempt to put down a commentary for our times on the Acts of the Apostles. Hard to decide which is more surprising—that Woiwode accomplishes his task so well, or that such mainstream and righteously secular organs as the *Los Angeles Times Book Review* gave the book the front-page reviews it deserved.

Finally, treat yourself to any (really, all) of Joseph Epstein's collections of familiar essays: *Once More Around the Block*, *The Middle of My Tether*, and *A Line Out for a Walk*. Epstein's collections of literary essays are fine, too, but the per-page enjoyment quotient of these is unmatched among contemporary offerings. If you're pressed by foul humor, or not wanting to waste even ten minutes, these essays are always the antidote. I've passed copies along to dozens of people and every one of the recipients has returned for more.

Hugh Hewitt is a Southern California lawyer and co-host of PBS's "Life & Times" newsmagazine.

HERBERT HOOVER III

To obtain some insight on several rounds of political infighting and to provide some physical exercise (this book weighs over six pounds!), *Turmoil and Triumph*, by George P. Shultz.

For genuine belly laughs, *Dave Barry Does Japan*, by (who else?) Dave Barry.

To exercise your indignation, *Impostors in the Temple*, by Martin Anderson.

To pass some pleasant hours on an otherwise dull trip, once again read (this time in paperback) one of the best of the genre, *The Hunt for Red October*, by Tom Clancy.

For self-help, in almost any situation, *The Prince*, by Niccolò Machiavelli.

Herbert Hoover III is a private investor. →

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HENRY J. HYDE

Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History, selected and introduced by William Safire. This is a splendid compendium of speeches that have moved many people and even influenced the direction of history. Mr. Safire loves language and his skill and devotion have produced this rewarding, entertaining, and instructive volume.

The De-Valuing of America, by William J. Bennett, former secretary of education and one who served in several important posts during the Reagan/Bush years (of Blessed Memory). Bill Bennett tells it exactly as it is, with not so much as a nod to political correctness. Those who are puzzled by the social decay that envelops our society today and who are sincerely looking for answers that make sense should read this book.

Religious Liberty in the Supreme Court: The Cases that Define the Debate over Church and State, edited by Terry Eastland, is a valuable resource for the opinions of the court on perhaps the most contentious issue in all of constitutional law, save abortion. The reader is favored with Mr. Eastland's sure hand in the selection, introduction, and annotation of these cases, but editorial comment from major newspapers plus informed comment from three of the most highly regarded legal scholars add to the immense value of this volume.

No self-respecting office should be without *Politics in America* (Congressional Quarterly, 1994 edition) and *The Almanac of American Politics* (National Journal, 1994 edition). These are remarkable encyclopedias of all things congressional, including insightful biographies of every member of Congress.

Henry J. Hyde is the U.S. congressman from Illinois's sixth district.

FLORENCE KING

On my good days, my definition of a conservative is someone who has ordered a book from Liberty Press and knows who Irving Babbitt was. The arch-conservative literary critic, who died in 1935, was the special bane of Sinclair Lewis, who reputedly appropriated his name for a fictional jerk in a spirit of catty revenge.

Liberty Press has all of Babbitt's essay books. My favorite is *Democracy and Leadership*, which will tempt you to write "Clinton!" in the margins of every page. Don't though; the LP edition is beautifully bound and comes with a matching bookmark.

They also have that festival of political incorrectness, *The American Democrat*, by James Fenimore Cooper, who was most gloriously against everything and never gave a thought to the self-defeating bromide, "conservatism with a smiling face." If you agree with Mark Twain's assessment of Cooper's hideous fictional style (I do), wait till you savor these crisp, merciless essays. A world of difference; you wouldn't know it was the same writer.

My favorite book of 1993 is a biography of the actress with one name who always turns up in histories of the Second Empire. *Tragic Muse: Rachel of the Comédie Française*, by Rachel M. Brownstein, is an ingratiating look at a French-Jewish good old girl. There wasn't an arty bone in her body; she didn't even *like* neoclassical drama and never quite figured out what the plots were all about, but like a milk wagon horse who knows the route, she stopped and started in all the right places at all the right times and turned it into high art.

Florence King's first book, Southern Ladies and Gentlemen, *published in 1975, has just been reissued in paperback by St. Martin's Press.*

J. CHARLES KING

I believe that the best reading I do is the reading (or rereading) of traditional great books. Too many of us did most of this reading when we were still little more than children and do not realize how much more, as adults, we can find in great books. I have recently benefited greatly from rereading Virgil's *Aeneid* and *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostoevsky.

For another kind of reading, I recommend *The Forms and Orders of Western Liturgy from the Tenth to the Eighteenth Century: A Historical Introduction and Guide for Students and Musicians* (Clarendon Press). It provides a very useful account of the development of both Roman and Anglican liturgies. Those who share my dislike of recent attempts to bring liturgies into line with secular fads will find many reminders of the splendor of what is being lost.

The Loss of Virtue: Moral Confusion and Social Disorder in Britain and America, edited by Digby Anderson, is very much worth reading. The authors attempt to show the disastrous social effects of the waning of the practice of traditional virtues.

Finally, *Post-Liberalism: Studies in Political Thought*, by John Gray, proves that political stability need be neither arid and abstract nor totally cut off from real events, as it all too often is.

J. Charles King is president of the Liberty Fund.

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

The gift of Loeb the banker to all of us, the still-expanding Loeb Classical Library, offers the best of gift books, solidly bound, handy octavo volumes in which the original Greek or Latin text is faced page-by-page by a rigorously accurate English translation. The current crop of much-acclaimed new verse translations of both Homers, the *Aeneid*, and much else are all very well (or almost so, the eager ac-

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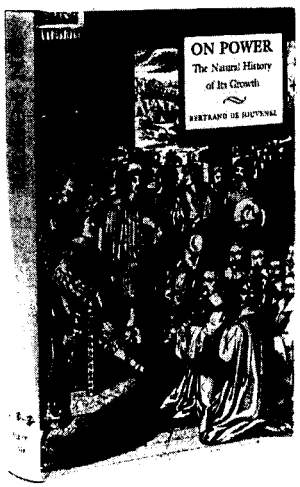

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claimers usually having neither Greek nor Latin), but they provide a satisfying contemporary English Lit. experience at the expense of any intimacy with the original text. Even the reader with only trace amounts of Latin and no Greek benefits from the pairing, easily acquiring more Latin by glancing over the parallel paragraph now and then, and often discovering recognizable meaning in the Greek too, given the growing Greek content of our own language.

"Classics" suggest Homer & Co. and all such literary literature, but it need not be so: an architect friend can be given his Vitruvius to discover how buildings were designed in the days of Augustus—he will have heard the name, of course, but chances (99 percent) are that he has not *read* a word of the text, and there are further chances that he might find the text interesting, or even useful. Ditto for medical friends & Hippocrates—they might even be surprised to discover that a text exists, merely because they will have heard that Hippocrates is a mythic name (it was not H. who wrote it but another man who claimed he was H.). Military friends and all those that way inclined can be given a gift of stratagems by Frontinus, and whatever variety of military history they might fancy, coolly analytical (Polybius), detailed and technical (Ammianus Marcellinus), stirringly dramatic (Xenophon), or bitterly revisionist (Tacitus). Scientist friends can receive marvelous summaries of Diogenes Laertius as well as Galen or the appropriate volumes of Aristotle, and if anyone has friendly feelings for a lawyer, he can give him Cicero for the prosecution or the defense, as the inclination goes. Finally, there is all of the literature as such, from Achilles Statius to Virgil, as well as the various anthologies ("Minor Latin Poets" is a particularly good one for the sort of friend who went astray and now teaches in a liberal arts college). And, by the way, the Loebs are not even that expensive.

Edward N. Luttwak is director of the geo-economics program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the author, most recently, of The Endangered American Dream: How to Stop the United States From Becoming a Third World Country and How to Win the Geo-Economic Struggle for Industrial Supremacy *(Simon & Schuster).*

WALTER A. McDOUGALL

Torment students and other naifs with *The Way Things Ought to Be*, by Rush Limbaugh. The longer we keep it on the best-seller list, the angrier Hillary gets. Ditto for David Brock's *The Real Anita Hill*, the brave, brilliant exposé by a prodigy who (I'm honored to say) was once a student of mine at Berkeley.

Stephen L. Carter's *The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion* is so unimpeachable that even Bill Clinton has "promised" to take it seriously.

Anyone 16 years or older who likes swashbuckling, espionage, love, lust, and irreverence in superbly crafted historical settings will devour the Captain Aubrey novels of Patrick O'Brian and the Flashman novels of George MacDonald Fraser. You'll probably find them only in paperback, so use them as stocking-stuffers. O'Brian depicts the Royal Navy in the Napoleonic wars (start with *Master and Commander*). Fraser lands his lovable coward in every scrape of the British Empire (start with *Flashman*).

To fans of serious fiction, give anything by Robertson Davies or the late Walker Percy.

For people too busy to finish a book, you can't do better than a gift subscription to Ben Stein's Diary—that is to say, *The American Spectator*.

Walter A. McDougall is professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania and author of . . . The Heavens and the Earth: A Political History of the Space Age, *which won the 1986 Pulitzer Prize in History. His new book is* Let the Sea Make a Noise . . . : A History of the North Pacific *(Basic Books).*

MYRON MAGNET

Patrick O'Brian, the Aubrey-Maturin novels. These addictive, fast-paced, beautifully written historical novels—the sixteenth of which, *The Wine-Dark Sea*, has just been published—are enduring minor classics, on a par with Conan Doyle or P.G. Wodehouse. Like Holmes and Watson or Jeeves and Wooster, the two protagonists are contrasting embodiments of British virtue, and the novels, while on the surface telling exciting, historically accurate adventure tales of the British Navy during the Napoleonic wars, underneath are highly intelligent meditations on such out-of-fashion values as honor, loyalty, friendship, courage, duty, steadfastness, and responsibility.

W.M. Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*. A novel for grown-ups, *Vanity Fair* gets better and more moving as the reader becomes older and, if not wiser, at least more experienced and therefore more interested in Thackeray's depiction of the interplay between chance and intention in shaping individual fate. Not the least of the book's grown-up virtues is its ability to look at the world through the eyes of a loving parent, rather than merely through those of a son or daughter absorbed by the mysteries of self, as in so many other novels. One of the very greatest novels of them all.

V.S. Naipaul, *A Bend in the River*. The masterpiece—so far—of the greatest living English novelist (Trinidad-born). A profound exploration of civilization and anarchy, and of the relation between the individual life and the social conditions that surround it.

J.-J. Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality*. Extravagant, maybe even dangerous, this nevertheless remains among the most profound, and certainly the most thrilling, of political treatises. Roger Masters's translation is superb.

Myron Magnet is a member of Fortune *magazine's board of editors and the author of* The Dream and the Nightmare: The Sixties' Legacy to the Underclass *(Morrow).*

(continued on page 30)

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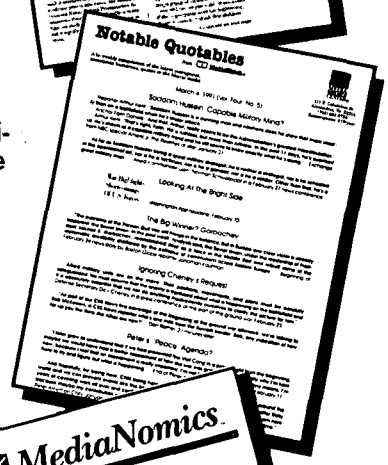
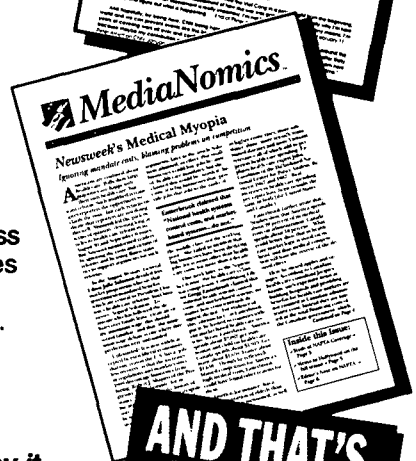
MediaWatch, a monthly newsletter that reviews news coverage of political and current events by the television networks, newspapers and news weeklies. "Newsbites" provide ongoing examples of bias and the "Janet Cooke Award" examines the month's most distorted story. Plus: In-depth studies and analysis.

TV, etc., a monthly newsletter that investigates the liberal issue agenda permeating prime time television, current cinematic fare and record releases and catalogues the off-screen political activities of the Hollywood Left.

Notable Quotables, a bi-weekly compilation of the most outrageous and humorous examples of bias from the media. At year-end the Linda Ellerbee Awards present the best quotes of the year.



MediaNomics, a monthly newsletter that examines national news coverage of business and economic issues and Hollywood's economic message.



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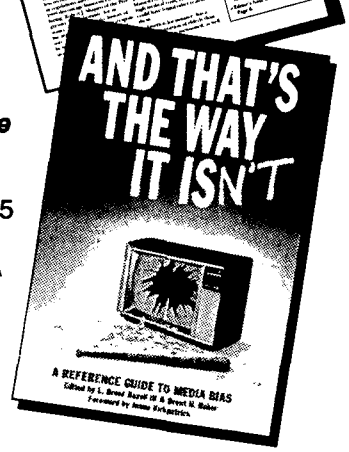

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MEDIA RESEARCH CENTER

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JAMES C. MILLER III

James M. Buchanan, *Better than Plowing and Other Personal Essays*. How a country boy from Tennessee grows up to become a world-famous economist, establish a new subdiscipline (public choice), and win the Nobel Prize for economic science.

Jeffrey Bell, *Populism and Elitism: Politics in the Age of Equality*. Populists are optimistic about the ability of people to make choices for themselves. Elitists are pessimistic, and want to make decisions *for* the great unwashed. One example: In free markets, people decide for themselves. When government does the job, bureaucrats decide for you. Not surprisingly, elitists prefer government.

Robert L. Bartley, *The Seven Fat Years: And How to Do It Again*. A complete repudiation of the revisionist historians' contention that Ronald Reagan's economic policies were benign at best and destructive at worst. Now nearly everyone, even Mr. Clinton, yearns for the kind of economic performance we experienced during the fat years of the 1980s.

Walter Miller, *A Canticle for Leibowitz*. My all-time favorite science fiction. Scary: not one, but two nuclear holocausts. More scary: Once a civilization loses knowledge ("burns the books"), how does it get it back?

Patricia Cornwell, *Cruel and Unusual*. Virginia's chief medical examiner, Kay Scarpetta, in another thriller. Is the corpse from the electric chair the convicted murderer? Or is the killer still on the loose?

James C. Miller, who served in the Reagan cabinet as director of management and budget, is chairman of the board of Citizens for a Sound Economy.

LYN NOFZIGER

After much thought and rumination, I have reached the disturbing conclusion that I didn't read a damn thing worth reading in the last year. This situation leaves me in the unenviable position of being able to recommend only two books.

One is a political memoir aptly named *Nofziger*, about the political life, times, and trials (literally) of yours truly, written by the author (every last word) of the same name. The other is a western novel titled *Tackett* by a fine author of western fiction also named Lyn Nofziger. Anyone who loves bang-bang-shoot-'em-up western fiction will love *Tackett*. I know. I did.

Otherwise, I would recommend any collection of Bill Watterson's comic strip, "Calvin and Hobbes," which puts the world in proper perspective; the latest edition of the *World Almanac*, which attempts to do the same; and *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, which will spell, pronounce, and define almost any obscene, vulgar, or just plain dirty word or phrase extant, essential knowledge these days, especially for older folks overwhelmed by a unique younger generation, both sexes of which are largely identifiable by their foul mouths.

Long-time Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger's books are published by Regnery Gateway.

JOHN PODHORETZ

I read books as entertainment, not homework, and in that spirit of hedonism I will recommend books I loved reading, not ones I think you *should* read.

The most delightful and entertaining novel I've read in years is Richard Russo's *Nobody's Fool*, which turns Thanksgiving week in an upstate New York town into a vivid human comedy starring Russo's wondrously inspired creation—a 60-year-old hand-to-mouth working man called Sully whose manly wisdom transforms a failed life into something approaching a state of grace.

Also a joy, after a weak start, is Michael Malone's *Foolscap*, a wild romp about universities, theater, sybaritic playwrights, and Sir Walter Raleigh.

The most moving novel of the year is Frank Conroy's *Body & Soul*, about the sentimental education of a musical genius.

Aurora 7, by Thomas Mallon, is a rare piece of autobiographical fiction that manages to be about a great deal more than the author—in this case, the mad rush of life in and around New York City on the 1962 day Scott Carpenter orbited the earth in a space capsule low on fuel. The plainness of Mallon's prose is a triumph of restraint, like the novel itself.

Making It, by Norman Podhoretz—yes, he's my father, but I had occasion to reread this once-scandalous 1968 confession for the first time in years and am convinced that people will still be reading it long after he, and I, have left this mortal plane.

John Podhoretz is the author of Hell of a Ride: Backstage at the White House Follies 1989-1993 *(Simon & Schuster).*

PETER SKERRY

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. One day someone will explore how one of our most insightful social critics went off the deep end—and in so doing may well shed light on late-twentieth-century American intellectual life. In the meantime, Jane Jacobs's first book remains a fresh and useful analysis of what about modern cities works and doesn't work—and why. And while her critique of urban planners stands, so does her implicit critique of laissez-faire policies.

Lon Fuller, *The Morality of Law*. Richard Nixon's former law professor at Duke, Lon Fuller went on to practice law in Boston and teach at Harvard. This book is the most

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stimulating and elegant articulation of contemporary natural-law theory that I am aware of.

Shelby Steele, *The Content of Our Character*. This is the most honest and penetrating discussion of contemporary race matters that I have come across recently. Shelby Steele manages to be his own person—quietly slicing through the cant about race among conservatives as well as liberals—without making himself the center of attention, which is quite a feat for any black intellectual these days.

T.R. Fehrenbach, *Lone Star: A History of Texas and the Texans*. A highly entertaining and informative narrative history about a place—and a state of mind—that many intellectuals would do well to know more about. It is written by an intriguing man, who writes from outside the academy in a Texas version of the classic Southern tradition of a gentleman scholar.

William A. Galston, *Liberal Purposes: Goods, Virtues, and Diversity in the Liberal State*. I am not sure this book succeeds in giving a sounder philosophical footing to a reformulated contemporary liberalism. But Galston certainly deserves high marks for a forthright, muscular critique of the mind-games that academic theoreticians have for some time now been advancing as their defense of liberalism.

Peter Skerry is the author of Mexican Americans: The Ambivalent Minority *(Free Press), nonfiction winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for 1992-1993.*

KENNETH Y. TOMLINSON

To those beautiful people in and around the White House who are panting over the prospects of national health care and a return to 90 percent marginal tax rates, I would prescribe Alec Waugh's *The Fatal Gift*.

To those preparing to follow American troops (under the U.N. flag) to any and all world trouble spots, take along Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop*. Little has changed.

To those seeking escape from the 1930s rerun now playing Washington, take a trip to Josh Pons's *Country Life Diary*—three years in the life of a thoroughbred breeding farm. Now this is the spirit of enterprise.

And for those who seek solace in culture, read Michael W. Harris's *The Rise of Gospel Blues*. There you will find that gospel blues traces its origins as a musical form to the 1920s and 30s and an extraordinary bluesman turned religious inspirationalist named Thomas A. Dorsey. You will also find that such old-time country classics as the Carter Family's "If You See My Savior . . . [Tell Him that You Saw Me]" were actually authored by Dorsey. My favorite discovery: The great line from Clyde Moody's "Six White Horses" ("If you don't believe I'm leaving, you can count the days I'm gone") was, in fact, the title of Dorsey's first copyrighted composition.

Kenneth Y. Tomlinson is editor-in-chief of Reader's Digest.

R. EMMETT TYRRELL, Jr.

Having diagnosed in *The Conservative Crack-Up* a conservative weakness that has badly debilitated the movement, namely conservatives' inability to recognize each other's work or role in a conservative counterculture, I would be a cad were I to ignore recent contributions to Western thought by our own *American Spectator* writers. Literate gift-givers cannot miss if they gift-wrap for their friends (and the occasional enemy of resilient disposition) David Brock's *The Real Anita Hill* or Thomas Mallon's *Rockets and Rodeos* or Terry Eastland's anthology *Religious Liberty in the Supreme Court* or Micah Morrison's *Fire in Paradise* or new editions of P.J. O'Rourke's *Bachelor Home Companion*, Michael Fumento's *The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS*, and George Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty*.

Still, there are other fine books that have pleased me of late. Agitated by the blowsy thought of contemporary pols and political thinkers manqués, Herbert E. Meyer has written a brief and trenchant tract, *Hard Thinking*. In it he argues that science, with all its insistence on verification, be adopted to the art of political pronunciamento. It is a refreshing exercise that only occasionally makes the mistake of exalting science over all else in the foolish way C.P. Snow did three decades back in *The Two Cultures*. I am reminded that Woodrow Wilson would not share Meyer's enthusiasm for hard thinking—scientific thinking, that is. Wilson's scrupling comes to mind for I have just finished a book that Jacques Barzun mentioned his 1991 Christmas Book recommendations, August Heckscher's *Woodrow Wilson*. This biography is every bit as good as Barzun asserted, revealing Mr. Wilson as a far more sympathetic figure than I had remembered, though still a statesman greatly flawed. Incidentally, were he around today, Wilson would be among the most politically incorrect of profs and doubtless a closet *American Spectator* reader.

Another book that recently pleased me is the first novel of William Faulkner's Snopes trilogy, *The Hamlet*. If present-day readers read it as the first of Faulkner's Clinton trilogy, they will find it terrifyingly timely. Faulkner creates memorable fig-

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ures, or perhaps it is the South that does, but it is Faulkner's eye that transforms the South into art. When he sees leaves on a tree or the dust swirling in a corral he does something with language that no novelist theretofore was quite capable of. He leaves the story behind and penetrates the reading mind with fauvist brushstrokes. It is from this novel that anthologists pull the popular short story, "Spotted Horses." If you admired "Spotted Horses," I suggest you read the whole novel.

Finally do not miss John Podhoretz's *Hell of a Ride*. If you doubt that Boy Clinton is an accidental president bequeathed us by the Country Club Republicans of the last administration, read this lively portmanteau of preposterosities by a gifted journalist. And Merry Christmas!

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. is editor-in-chief of The American Spectator *and the author of* The Liberal Crack-Up *and* The Conservative Crack-Up.

WILLIAM F. WELD

Jorge Luis Borges's genius is expressed in small doses. His eloquent poems, short stories, and philosophical and literary essays reveal a mind obsessed with paradox, irony, and ratiocination. Borges transcends geopolitical boundaries to explore the questions that have haunted humanity since time immemorial. *Labyrinths: Short Stories and Other Writings* provides a sampling of Borges's work.

Among the many recently published analyses of political correctness, Jonathan Rauch's *Kindly Inquisitors: The New Attacks on Free Thought* stands out as a thoughtful, provocative defense of civil liberties and liberal inquiry. Rauch's unique perspective, derived from personal experience, lends to the poignancy of his thesis.

In his novel *Burr*, Gore Vidal recounts the life and times of the black sheep of our founding fathers. With his characteristic blend of humor, irreverence, and astounding detail, Vidal creates the illusion of having been there. Follow this with another of Vidal's classic novels, *1876*.

Ford Madox Ford's *Parade's End* offers layers of insight about the bitter passage of a bygone era and the need for new symbols in a new age. Another great read from Ford is *The Good Soldier: A Tale of Passion*.

In *The Constitution of Liberty*, F. A. Hayek examines the underlying principles of Western civilization, arguing that while the meaning is still intact, words such as "liberty" and "freedom" have lost their power. Our "old truth" must be restated for a new world. First published in 1960, Hayek's thesis is no less relevant today.

William Safire's *Full Disclosure* is still the best novel of manners and intrigue inside the Beltway.

Michael Hammer and James Champy, in *Reengineering the Corporation*, wisely warn that the United States will not lead the world into the next century unless we abandon business practices developed in the last. The authors say it best: "This is a book about the future that is already here and a book for people who expect to be a part of it."

Graham Wallas explores the relationship between human nature and the empirical art of politics in his volume, *Human Nature in Politics*, first published in 1908.

The Long Dark Tea-Time of the Soul, by Douglas Adams, is a must for anyone with an appetite for science fiction.

Finally, as I have said elsewhere, Vladimir Nabokov is the most brilliant writer I have ever encountered. If God truly resides in the well-chosen word, *Pale Fire* is a work of divine inspiration.

William F. Weld is the governor of Massachusetts.

JAMES Q. WILSON

We are becoming acutely conscious of how difficult it is to make good citizens out of energetic and thrill-seeking young men. Two powerful, first-hand accounts of just how bad things can get when society fails to solve that problem are: Elijah Anderson, *Street Wise: Race, Class, and Change in an Urban Community*, and Bill Buford, *Among the Thugs*. The first is a description of street life among young blacks in a large eastern city that depicts in the impersonal language of social science what many years ago Claude Brown portrayed so vividly in the autobiographical *Manchild in the Promised Land*. Things haven't gotten better. Buford's book puts the reader amidst the British toughs who regularly and systematically terrorize spectators and townspeople at or near a football game.

That many utopian intellectuals are blissfully unaware of these core cultural problems is tellingly shown in Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*, and Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution*. Both of these books ought to be mandatory reading for everyone who thinks they know how to design a better society.

James Q. Wilson is James Collins Professor of Management and Public Policy at UCLA and the author most recently of The Moral Sense *(Free Press).* ❐

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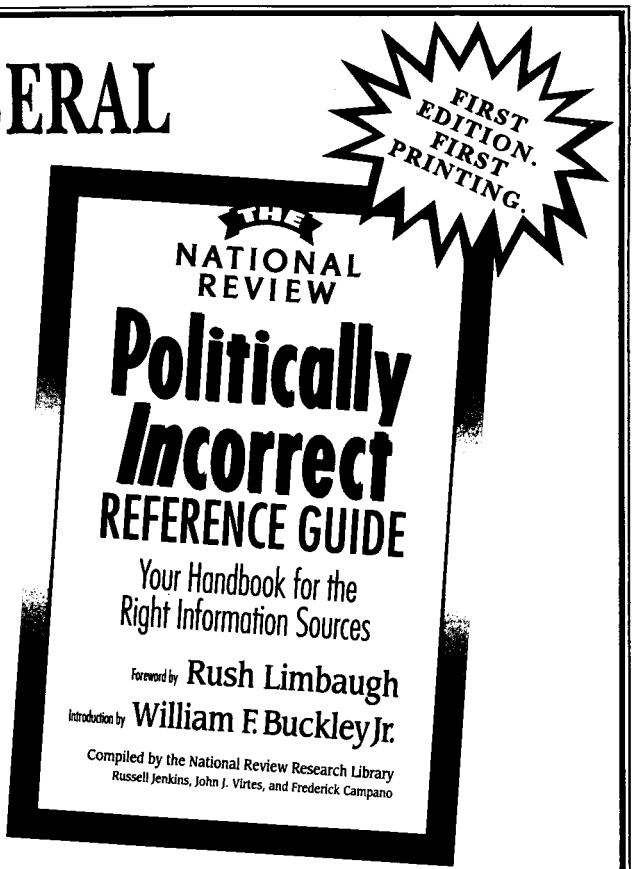
Had Enough Liberal Disinformation, Distortion, and Political Correctness?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William McGurn

Missionary Capitalism

By stressing values and opening up credit to the Third World's poor, Opportunity Programs is breaking the World Bank's international aid monopoly.

It's early morning here along the southern coast of Thailand, and I am taking in the charms of the Dusit Resort and Polo Club. Late last evening my wife and I arrived at the check-in desk to champagne cocktails, and this morning breakfasted on a feast of tropical fruit and local delicacies in the aptly named Palm Room. Naturally we are here for a conference on poverty.

Poverty conferences, of course, have been a staple of Asia's 5-star hotels, dating back to the October 1975 annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund/World Bank, where host Imelda Marcos thoughtfully provided a raft of new luxury accommodations as well as a white fence around Manila's slums so that delegates would not have to lay eyes on a poor person during their stay. It is all part of a grand tradition that continues to this day, as I found in May when I was unable to reserve a table at the Manila Hotel's romantic Champagne Room because the Asian Development Bank had booked every one.

But now it's eight o'clock on my first morning at the Dusit, and already it's pretty clear that this is not your standard poverty confab. I might have expected something different, when instead of the usual chocolate on my pillow I found a note informing me that "tomorrow's devotional" would be based on a reading from Isaiah 58 ("And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day"). For this is a meeting of the Chicago-based Opportunity International and the Sydney-based Maranatha Trust, twin umbrella organizations that under the name Opportunity Programs constitute the only global effort aimed at bringing capitalism to the world's poor. For once, the American taxpayer is not footing the bill.

And that is how I have found myself up for an 8 a.m. Bible reading. Again there will be surprises. For the reading is followed in short order by a highly entertaining talk by Tony Campolo, an Italian Baptist preacher from South Philadelphia who is something of a cross between Billy Graham and Don Rickles. Tony inclines to the more leftward end of the spectrum here—he has somehow got it into his head that Reagan shared with Marx a faith in heavy industry—but he's better than Jay Leno and has no hang-ups about wealth per se. Certainly he is far from Mencken's Puritanism ("the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy"). If Christianity is true, Tony insists,

William McGurn is a senior editor at the Far Eastern Economic Review.

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Christians should be fun-loving. As he puts it, "I keep running into Christians who stand and tell me they're full of joy. I feel like telling them: 'Please inform your face.'"

But I know I'm hooked when Eddie Cross begins to speak. A small businessman from Zimbabwe, Eddie devotes his talk to a withering account of Africa's problems. The black market (or "informal sector") is the only thing keeping Africa afloat, he says, reeling off horror story after horror story of government malfeasance. But what really endears me to Eddie is what comes next. Bless his libertarian heart, this is no pitch for more money or better management. "Oh, for that glorious day when we can say, 'Keep your damn American dollars,'" he tells the audience, his voice filling the hotel ballroom. "We'd rather have our dignity and our micro-enterprise."

Microenterprise. This is the cornerstone of the Opportunity approach, and with it they are shaking up the whole development racket. In most ways it is just what it sounds like: development from the bottom up, through small businesses that make America's mom-and-pop shops look like U.S. Steel. The poor, the idea goes, are just as entrepreneurial as the rich. "I challenge any technocrat to approximate the patience, determination, and creativity of the poor," says Benjamin Montemayor, executive director of Bridge to Progress, one of eleven Opportunity partners in the Philippines. "Rag-making, umbrella repair, food vending: you name it and in the Philippines you will find the poor using every bit of space, every centavo, every piece of junk to generate income."

In most ways it is just what it sounds like: development from the bottom up, through small businesses that make America's mom-and-pop shops look like U.S. Steel.

What the poor do not have, the Opportunity people say, is credit. Typically, Third World countries have banking systems that soak up savings from the countryside for use in the cities. And because it costs as much to administer a $100 loan as a $10,000 loan, the banks just don't do it. In this situation loan sharks provide the only access to credit among the poor, with predictable consequences.

Opportunity is not the first organization to extend credit to the poor. But it is among the few to insist that the poor are just as capable of paying back loans as the rich, and at market rates. In the U.S. this view received some attention when Bill Clinton met with Muhammad Yunus of Bangladesh in Washington and declared him worthy of a Nobel Prize. A professor at Chittagong University in Bangladesh in the 1970s who personally lent $30 to some entrepreneurs in a nearby slum as part of an experiment, Yunus found that they all paid back. He lent out more money, and as the amounts got bigger and bigger it led him to found the Grameen Bank, none of whose loans (apart from housing) exceeds $75.

At the center of the Opportunity story is a transplanted New Zealand orphan named David Bussau, who as a small businessman himself has prospered in everything from construction to fish-and-chip shops. A rugged Mel Gibsonish type with thick, graying hair, Bussau by 1975 had found that the challenge had gone out of making money and was looking for something more. Volunteer work through his church—he had brought relief to northern Australia after a cyclone nearly wiped out the town of Darwin—led to his founding of the Maranatha Trust (the word comes from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians and means "until He comes again"). When an earthquake hit Bali the following year, the Bussau family again packed their bags and moved to Indonesia. There they came head-to-head with the problem with traditional aid: once you had patched up people's homes and got them back on their feet, they soon fell into debt again with little chance for upward mobility. It was then that Bussau decided to lend these people the small amounts of start-up capital they needed to launch themselves into business.

Opportunity International, an American organization, was engaged in similar projects around the world, though it too had not yet hit on the right formula. The two groups came together in Indonesia when an Opportunity project ran into some trouble. Opportunity had started out with the same self-help agenda, but its prescription—joint ventures between partners in the developed and undeveloped world—had proved unwieldy. The two decided to pool their resources, and today their Opportunity Programs alliance spans forty-five countries worldwide.

"Microenterprise is a hotbed now in the aid community," Bussau says, not without a dollop of irony. "But that isn't what they were saying twenty years ago when we launched it. Back then we were 'capitalists,' 'right-wingers,' 'exploiters'—you name it, we were the enemy."

The approach is simple. When Opportunity moves into a target area, the first thing it does is set up a local organization with a board, almost like a bank. It provides the board with start-up capital and administrative funds and some help in training. But all the decisions about how much to lend, whom to lend to, and under what conditions are left to the local boards. These loans have been as small as $25, but most are in the $300 to $500 range. All the initiative is left to the poor themselves. They must come up with their own ventures, though the partner group will help them hone their business plans and offer related financial advice.

In this business the key ingredient is not collateral but character. Because loans are not extended by distant bank executives or aid workers but members of the local community, those doing the lending usually know the recipient per-

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sonally (or at least know of him). Thus they are well aware of any reputation he might have. Peer pressure is likewise intense. Recipients know that if they default, not only will they get no more money but there will be none for their neighbors either. Their neighbors know it, too.

"How do we decide if you will get a loan?" says Aftab Suri, a retired Pakistani army major who now runs the Al-falah Development Institute, Opportunity's partner group in Lahore. "First I look at your face. I try to see if it is an honest face.

"Then you fill out an application. Then we send two people out to see you in your home, to see what kind of man you are, to hear what the people around you think of you. Only then do we assess your project."

No one would claim that the jobs thus produced are glamorous. Most are backroom enterprises where state-of-the-art means cinder-block walls and a corrugated tin roof. Take Minda Lumio of Valenzuela, the Philippines. Married with six children (outside Muslim countries, women account for half of all Opportunity loans), Minda was looking for a way to supplement her husband's meager wages as a factory hand. In 1988 she learned about the Opportunity partner group KMBI. She applied for and received a $185 loan to upgrade a roadside *sari-sari* (variety) store beside their rented house. Two later loans (total $370) led to further expansion. Her fourth loan, for $481, was used to buy a pig for a swine-raising venture, conducted from the side of the house. With her profits Minda not only bought the home she was living in but enlarged it to launch yet another venture: letting rooms. Today Minda is a respected business leader in her own right and is called upon to help advise on other applicants.

"The person is everything," says Benji Montemayor. "If he has the right values—discipline, hard work, entrepreneurial drive—a bad project will succeed. If he doesn't have the values, even the best project will flop."

As its members would be the first to tell you, Opportunity's success is much more than having come up with a better mousetrap. Always they come back to values, and they do this first by being clear about themselves. Not for these folks dreary presentations on the causes of poverty, or technical mumbo jumbo about the lack of fresh water, roads, infrastructure, or any of the 101 other things typically held responsible for the lack of development. "If you wait for those things," says Bussau, "you'll wallow in poverty forever."

Instead, Opportunity starts from God. Theirs is the God of Genesis, Who created man in His image, made the heavens and the earth—and pronounced it *good*. Accordingly the conference here functions more as retreat than seminar, and the emphasis on a faith-rooted development gives participants the confidence and fortitude to take on problems that have thus far stymied everyone else. Without doubt the Dusit sometimes resembles a revivalist tent: we ended the week looking very much like a soft-drink commercial as all 200 or so of us joined hands, formed a giant circle, and delivered ourselves of a rousing rendition of the folk hymn "Here I Am, Lord." Rather than dismiss them as Holy Rollers, it would be more accurate to say that they are just people who take the Bible seriously. When the rest of us hear the Sermon on the Mount or the admonition to "go forth ye and teach all nations," we think it comforting hyperbole. These people pack their bags.

Yet they are not proselytizers. They are quite firm about this. On the other hand, neither are they indifferent about their faith. They put me in mind of a recent dinner I had with a Catholic priest I know in Hong Kong, a man who has devoted the better part of thirty years of his life to the city's Chinese poor, running schools, counseling children, and suchlike. Over a meal whose very simplicity reflected his commitment, he enumerated the impressive services he provided for his charges—while making it clear that he worked hard not to give any of these people the least hint of the driving passion and joy behind his sacrifice.

"The multilaterals are too technical," says one Indian participant. "They look at a man and ask, 'What kind of a degree has he got?' We look at the same fellow and ask, 'What kind of man is he?'"

The Opportunity people would not make that mistake. Although converts are not important and the stress is on service, no one could spend more than five minutes with these people without immediately understanding *why* they serve. "We have come together from twenty-five countries to sing the same song," says Dr. Vinay Samuel, an Indian-born Anglican theologian based in Oxford. "Ours is not the work of heroic individuals; it is the work of servants who wish to glorify their God." Fail to understand this and you understand nothing about them.

Even those who do not share their faith are sometimes impressed. In May 1992, the University of Manchester conducted an audit into Maranatha's numbers. Like others before them, they could not help but comment on its values as well. "Although the network has a common Christian philosophy and motivation, with most (but not all) being committed Christians, no evidence of aggressive or insensitive evangelism was observed or reported during the study. It would seem that the network's mission is one of service through their works and by the example of their lives." I wonder if anyone would ever say the same of the International Monetary Fund?

Whatever it is, it's working. Last year the Opportunity network created 16,132 new jobs and salvaged 17,088 oth-

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ers worldwide on loans totalling $6.6 million. (In 1993 the World Bank's lending to Asia alone was $5.57 *billion*.) The average loan to create a job was only $412, and the repayment rate was 97 percent. The figures are even more impressive when set in relative terms within given communities. In the Philippines, for example, Opportunity reports one job for every $1,200 invested—one-eighth the average $9,600 cost for large firms registered with the Philippines Board of Investment and almost half of the $2,000 reported by small firms to the country's Department of Labor and Employment.

Perhaps most telling, Opportunity is happy to allow outsiders to come in and verify their numbers (the group has had at least three audits by different outside universities). In sharp contrast, the big multilateral aid groups have been waging a bitter battle to keep their books closed even as they request ever more funding from Uncle Sam—and in the teeth of increasing failure rates found by even their own internal studies. Well, I suppose *someone* has to pay for the nineteen World Bank vice-presidents who bring down a tax-free $165,000 a year.

Although most of the Opportunity folks gathered here do not pay much attention to the development establishment, the differences are worth noting. Apart from the money (a standard World Bank project might cost more than Opportunity's entire annual budget), Opportunity works from the ground up, while the banks begin with government and hope benefits trickle down. Even where these multilateral aid groups lend to private business, money is still channelled through the host government. "They are at the other end of the spectrum," says Maranatha Program Director Leigh Coleman of these multilateral lending agencies. "They don't even know how to talk to us."

But the critical difference has to do with how they see themselves. The banks define themselves by policy and projects; Opportunity, by people and values. "The multilaterals are too technical," says one Indian who asks not to be named. "They look at a man and ask, 'What kind of a degree has he got?' We look at the same fellow and ask, 'What kind of man is he?' "

Did I mention the most distinctive feature of these people? They are cheerful. As an alumnus of all too many development conferences, I have too often noticed the despair just below the champagne fizz. Even those who start out with enthusiasm by and large succumb to deep disillusionment, forced to explain past failures and argue that development is just around the corner, only a billion more dollars or a billion more condoms away. But for Christians despair remains the one unforgivable sin. Many of the Opportunity people here believe that if the Asian Development Bank and others channelled the money through private groups like Opportunity, they could solve most of the problems. I'm not so sure. As they are quick to point out when it comes to their recipients, too much money can be more of a problem than too little, and the same probably holds for the best of institutions as well.

Still, it is this quiet assurance that allows the Opportunity people to see in estimates of a billion poor remaining in the world a gauntlet thrown down and not an excuse to throw up their hands in despair. Not that there is any self-delusion. Eddie Cross puts it best. In the last formal session of the conference, he acknowledges the obstacles but nonetheless ends on a note of confidence. "We are indeed small in numbers," he says, "but maybe that is what Christianity is all about. For this is the mustard seed, and the word for the world is—just watch us grow."

Amen. ❐

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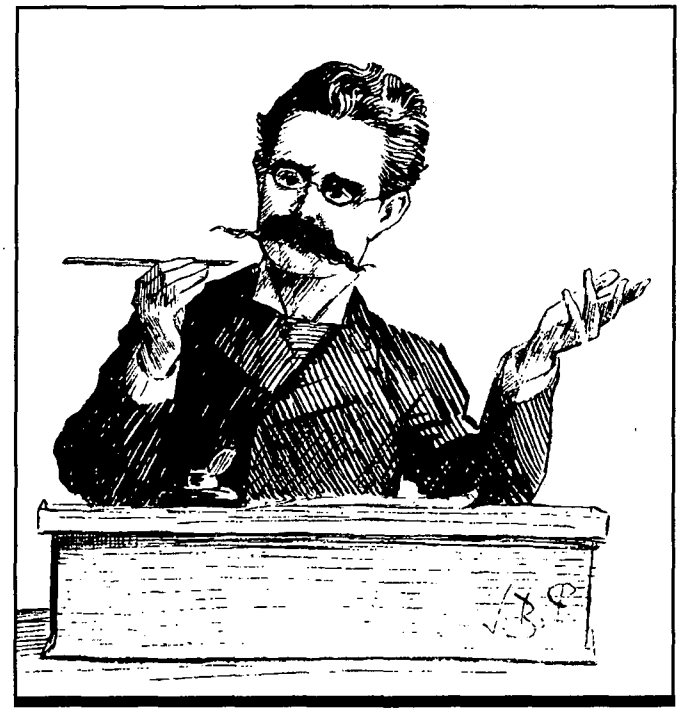
Edward Norden

Allah in L.A.

Will the freedom America extends to its third-largest faith teach Islam's adherents to cherish democracy?



The interrupting child zooms into the principal's office wearing her Friday best and stands there momentarily catching her breath. "Mohammed," she now announces, "is making fun of me!"

This news fails to shock. "You tell Mohammed not to do that," Sister Shahida says. "Tell him I said it isn't right."

Friday is the biggest day of the week at the Islamic Center of Southern California in Los Angeles. This is when Sister Shahida's happy, nicely behaved kids come in from all over the megalopolis with uniforms pressed and hair squeaky-clean. Shahida Alikhan is a patient, relaxed type of woman, pudgy, with a soft voice and a cast in her eye. The jeweled button in one of her nostrils, not to mention her sari, tips you off that she probably comes from the Indian subcontinent, and in fact the principal of the center's five-days-a-week school comes from the town of Hyderabad, where an archipelago of Moslems in a sea of Hindus try to get through the day.

Apparently the idea of the New Horizon School is simple. It's to instill in these American kids enough Islamic knowledge and habits that by the time they are through the sixth grade and have to transfer to public schools, Madonna won't distract them. The sixth grade, for the moment, is as far as New Horizon goes—62 kindergartners and first-graders here on South Vermont Avenue deep in Latino and Korean territory, 35 older kids in a building in Pasadena. Some of their parents are American blacks. Most, however—including all the fathers in intermarriages with American-born women—have moved to this country from *Dar al-Islam*, the sprawling, not-easily-defined House of Islam, and now live all over the medley of towns, the world-in-a-city which is Greater L.A. This creates serious logistical problems. It necessitates, Sister Shahida explains as she glances into a classroom where boys and girls together are being fed before the prayers and Dr. Hathout's sermon, that parents and children in outlying towns leave home early, practically at dawn, to connect to the bus shuttling between the center and Pasadena. "That must be hard," her visitor says. To which the principal says no, devout Moslems get up before dawn anyway to say the first prayer of the day. The implication being that it takes a devout Moslem householder and taxpayer in America to find the money to enroll his kid at New Horizon. Tuition is $320 monthly, says Sister Shahida in her lovely accent, and there aren't many scholarships.

Yes, she says, there are dozens of Moslem day schools like this one from coast to coast. Her visitor knows that most experts believe Islam to be this country's fastest-growing religion. Black Americans are steadily converting to Islam—regular Islam, not the Nation of Islam.

Edward Norden is a frequent contributor to The American Spectator *and* Commentary.

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Because of this and the fact that a good part of the intake of Third Worlders in the last few decades has come from Egypt, Pakistan, the West Bank, and other such places, Islam stateside may already have knocked the various combined denominations of Judaism from the distant number three spot behind the various Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church. Schools like New Horizon are multiplying.

Here the five pillars of the faith—alms-giving, prayer, pilgrimage, the Ramadan fast, profession of God's unity and Mohammed's prophethood—are drummed into little heads. Concomitantly, females are to be modest, males are to control themselves. Christmas goes unmentioned at New Horizon, but arithmetic is taught, and Halloween, says the principal, offers a chance to learn how Allah makes pumpkins grow. How strict, how ultra-orthodox, how fundamentalist, as it were, is the Islamic viewpoint and practice inculcated here? she is asked. Well, pretty strict but not too, she admits. For example, the kids learn to keep the daylight fast during the month of Ramadan by doing without a snack. But so far as meat is concerned, they are taught only to shun pork—they needn't stick to *hallal* butchers and can eat with their parents at the Sizzler next door or the McDonald's up the street. The implication is that an ultra establishment might not be able to draw even the 97 pupils New Horizon currently does.

Christmas goes unmentioned at New Horizon, but arithmetic is taught, and Halloween, says the principal, offers a chance to learn how Allah makes pumpkins grow.

On the kindergarten floor, mattresses carefully laid out for naps have not yet been rolled up. On the first-grade blackboard, the Arabic characters are as slithery as eels. Sister Shahida estimates under questioning that half the kids enrolled have at least one Arab parent. The kids of New Horizon get Arabic as a second language. An Arab is top person at the center, and all the literature at the center's bookstore that is not in English is in Arabic—as the Arabs go, so go the Moslems. The school is in back, the bookstore out front, offering among other things material highly unfriendly to Israel. You have Korans in Arabic and English, gaily illustrated primers for children, pamphlets and cassettes, Arabic-English dictionaries, how-tos for adult beginners and the center's bimonthly organ, the *Minaret*. The salesperson this morning is a black American. Her face is clear of any makeup, and only it and her hands are visible. She now announces to the browsers that she's about to close for an hour—the center is beginning to be jammed with a peaceful crowd gathering for devotions, which have priority over business.

Here is the beautiful face of Islam. All the nationalities and skin colors, many hundreds of people gathering together peacefully, no, better than peacefully, with love for each other and submission in their hearts. They are shedding for an hour all thoughts of the outside world as they shed their shoes and Reeboks at the entrance. You have Arabs and Bangladeshis and Filipinos, Kurds and Turks and Somalis, bare-headed men in suits and skullcapped men in the *galabiya*, egg-heads and laborers, Anglos with their gentle blue eyes and the posterity of black Africans rounded up by Arab Moslem slavers and traded to the Yankees long, long ago. There are singles and families, born and naturalized U.S. citizens plus aliens legal and illegal, people with good credit and people no doubt on relief, even a couple of Koreans from a nearby strip mall whose curiosity must have gotten the better of them.

Into just such a crowd of serene humanity as this Malcolm X said he blended during his famous pilgrimage to Mecca. "The mosques in America," an unsigned piece in the current issue of the *Minaret* complains, "are degraded by power struggles that divide different families and factions." No sign of it here. Everyone seems to be a brother or sister to everyone. Some hurry to wash their hands, ears, neck and feet. All will soon be led in prayer by Dr. Hathout, who'll also deliver his *khutba*, or sermon. Yet as graciously as Sister Shahida has done, he makes time for your reporter, sitting him down in his office upstairs.

Hassan Hathout, M.D., Ph.D., has grievances. These for now must be inferred, because here is a bare-headed man wearing a smile, a suit, tie, and silvery pencil mustache who, as they say in California, is very much in control of himself and his environment. His office is equipped with more than one phone and VCR, and stocked with at least as many of his cassettes as there are on sale in the bookstore. Yes, he's an Egyptian, an Arab, an Arab-American. He would rather, however, talk about Islam, about the fact that Americans know it less for what it is than for what it is not. The call he felt to tell Americans the truth about Islam was, he says, one of two reasons why, after three satisfying decades, he quit a wonderful job as clinical professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Kuwait University and moved to L.A. some years ago. The other was to help minister to the growing number of Moslems here, both immigrants and native-born. So he teaches and officiates at the center, and gives lectures around the city informing the open-minded that Islam is as profound and benevolent as Judaism and Christianity and demonstrating in his own person that Moslems don't have horns.

But can Islam be the religion of a permanent minority and simultaneously be authentic? Doesn't it require a theocratic state of its own to actualize its principles? Dr. Hathout smiles. "Of course it can survive as a minority religion," he answers. "Only think of India, only think of China—Moslems have lived there as minorities for ages." The smile probably means that these are the type of ignorant, perhaps unconsciously hostile questions to be expected from an American who most likely gets his informa-

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tion from TV and the movies. But Dr. Hathout, like Sister Shahida, is more than patient. The twice-exiled doctor admits without the subject having to be explicitly raised that Hollywood alone isn't to blame for ignorance about Islam or for Islam's stubbornly poor image in this country.

Would Dr. Hathout call India and China part of Dar al-Islam? "Perhaps." What and where is the House of Islam? But this question isn't compelling for him, so without being impolite he changes the subject. Dr. Hathout prefers talking about the real as opposed to the caricatured Islam. He controls himself and the interview. His link to the Moslem Brothers certainly isn't brought up by him. It has to be guessed, unless you have flipped through the *Minaret* beforehand. Because although Dr. Hathout doesn't really enjoy discussing his young manhood with an unknown and possibly hostile American, he has written about it in his "Living Memories" column in the magazine. The essay was a reminder of how easy-going the doctor's native land is for an Arab country—the leading Arab country, for as Egypt goes so go the Arabs. You thus learn from "Living Memories" that when the young Hassan Hathout returned all the way back in 1949 to King Farouk's Cairo from Palestine, where he had been a doctor with the Egyptian army trying to snuff Israel at birth, he was jailed along with thousands of other *Ikhwan Muslimin*, thousands of other Moslem Brothers, but only lightly tortured by his fellow Egyptians, his fellow Arabs, his fellow Moslems, before being released. Three years passed and Gamal Abdel Nasser came to power, and before long Dr. Hathout and many other cadres and leaders of the Brotherhood were back in jail. Tortured again, the young doctor was soon released, this time on condition he leave his country.

He had gone to Kuwait with his wife, his scars, his degree. There he was to live for a generation as a resident alien, well paid, becoming a friend to some of the most puissant men in the emirate and physician to their wives and daughters. "It's not as oppressive as many neighboring countries," he says. Yet he finally left, he exiled himself and his wife again, this time voluntarily, leaving that part of the world in which the call to prayer is full-throated and migrating to, of all places, the U.S. His reasons have been noted. Yet was there no country in the Arab or Moslem worlds in which a man of his qualities and beliefs might have felt more at home? The Islamic Republic of Sudan? Saudi Arabia? "No!" Iran? Pakistan? "No, no, no!" says Dr. Hathout. Throughout that part of the world, he says, the people yearn for democracy—by which he means an enlightened Islamic regime—but he doubts whether the various kings and dictators who purport to rule in the name of, or at least with due consideration for, Islam will step aside. The impression you get is of a man who has either given up on the Moslems in their heartland, or realizes that if there is an Islamic revolution in his crucial homeland, it will be made by the younger men who have come of age in his absence and in whose gleaming eyes he and his ilk are wimps.

Dr. Hathout does sound a few of the same themes as this younger generation. The old grievance against the West is there in him, bubbling just under the surface, breaking through now and again. "Why did the U.S. persuade the Soviets to stop mistreating their Jews," the doctor asks, "while the Serbs do what they like to the Moslems in Bosnia?" And why, he asks, does the West, meaning the U.S., not step in when the results of a democratic election in Algeria favoring the Islamic party are nullified by a junta? "It seems as if when it comes to human rights, a different standard applies to the aspirations and sufferings of Moslems, does it not?" To which your reporter can only answer, "Not really," before Dr. Hathout says, "One hopes not. But it does seem as if this millennium, which started with the Crusades, may be ending the same way."

"A new world order is being planned today," he concludes. "It is being planned without Moslem participation. Our response to this is to see to it that there is a vibrant, alive, influential Islamic presence in this country, the one which makes world orders."

Does this mean that Dr. Hathout feels exiled in enemy territory here in America, here in L.A.? Not at all, he answers immediately. In fact, as a Moslem person and personage he actually prefers the freedom of this country, and even if an Islamic government arises in Egypt, he wouldn't go back. The right life is, if not easy to live in America, then quite possible. "The only limits on the faithful here," he says, "are those imposed by their own laziness and indifference. Therefore the importance of New Horizon, you see. We have to reach a critical mass of Moslems who make the supreme effort to educate their children in the faith. If that happens, Islam has a place and a future in this pluralistic country."

Downstairs, the women have segregated themselves from the men—Sister Shahida and Mrs. Hathout are off in a semi-isolated room with the other members of their gender, none veiled, all kerchiefed. The little girls from New Horizon join their mothers, the little boys their fathers. Only those people in the quiet, tight-packed crowd who are weighing conversion, Anglos for the most part, have their little coeducational group.

First come the prayers. They are led in Arabic by Dr. Hathout, all the males kneeling and standing, kneeling and standing and bowing towards Mecca, hundreds of foreheads contacting the wall-to-wall carpet together as he chants the words heard from loudspeakers in Beirut, Jerusalem, etc. Next, an announcement in English to the totally attentive congregation. Dr. Hathout in a controlled preacher's voice

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expresses gratitude that the faithful are being tested, exactly as Allah promised Mohammed, peace be upon him, they would be. Now is a time when Moslems can prove themselves by rallying to their brethren in need. Is the reference to Bosnia? Somalia? No, to the Cairo earthquake. All donations today into the *zakat*, the alms box, will go to helping the quake victims, says Dr. Hathout. And not to worry—every last penny will go to them, not one will go astray.

He starts the *khutba* by posing the question he says is posed to him by numbers of Moslem parents in L.A. before every Christmas season—"Is a tree all right for the children?" No, he tells them and his Friday listeners as definitely as any old-fashioned rabbi might, it is not all right. "Christmas is not our *eid*," he says, *eid* being the Arabic for a Moslem religious occasion or feast. "We should celebrate our *eids*, not those of others." A question, then, of self-respect. But there's a second, a practical reason why Christmas trees are out. "We Moslems are a minority in this country, and a minority is at risk of losing its identity." Having a tree is one way of enhancing that risk. Another is intermarrying. To be sure, Dr. Hathout admits, the Koran allows a man, meaning a Moslem man, to marry a Christian or Jewish woman—he needn't add that according to Islamic law she and her kids automatically become Moslems, nor does he have to tell his flock that intermarriage for a Moslem woman is *haram*, forbidden. But though a man is permitted a wife not born Moslem, Dr. Hathout urges the men to stick to their own kind. "A Moslem who cares about his faith and whether his children will be raised as good Moslems is better off to choose a Moslem woman."

Although trees are discouraged, adult Moslems need not ignore Christmas, indeed are encouraged by Dr. Hathout to mark it in a special way. "We can wish our Christian friends a happy holiday, even though the tree shows that it was a pagan holiday originally," he goes on. "And we can and should take the opportunity to educate the Christians, telling them that Jesus is a prophet for us and that we believe in his virgin birth. Most of them have no idea!" Still nothing really surprising from this Ob/Gyn. "It is our duty to educate mankind." And then: "In a polite way, and with a smiling face, and with all due respect, we should tell them that we are astonished and shudder at the idea that God took on human form. We should say that it leads us to believe that your scriptures have been tampered with."

This *does* surprise your reporter. When you travel in the lands of the old Caliphate it's not uncommon to hear both illiterate and superbly educated Moslems scoff in private and public at the divinity of a flesh-and-blood man. Yet it wasn't the sort of thing one expected Dr. Hathout to put into so many words, not here in America, not in the semi-publicity of his Friday talk in English. The Christmas *khutba* continues. You can hear a pin drop, the children are so well-behaved, and next the faithful are told to let their fellow Americans know that Islam is not as it is said to be. They are told to show them first-hand that Moslems aren't just "brutes and terrorists." Much progress, Dr. Hathout says, has been and continues to be made in that direction. But there's a long way to go. The problem isn't so much with the American man-in-the-street, who is "nice," as with the "hard core" of the American political class. They are the ones "who really run this country, and they hate Islam because Islam stands for justice and against exploitation."

Above all, the problem is with "the church," and with, yes, the Pope. "I say this not in hatred," says Dr. Hathout, "but the Pope is very politically minded and he means business." Statements by the Pope deploring the situation in countries where, in Dr. Hathout's formulation, "the Moslems have requested to be governed by the Koran," show that the Crusades aren't over. Presumably the reference is to the Pope's remarks about the Islamic Republic of Sudan, which has been massacring and starving its rebel Christian and animist minority for years. Dr. Hathout reminds his audience of the competition for adherents, the missionizing war, underway on the periphery of Dar al-Islam—the political business the Pope is serious about is the capture of actual or potential Moslem souls. This periphery runs through Sudan and perhaps Sarajevo, but does it also include Los Angeles? Dr. Hathout doesn't say.

He does say that Christianity is "an illness planning to attack us." And he calls on his listeners to resist by keeping the faith and making it known to others. "Allah," he says, "gave us the luck that when we do our missionizing work, it's not to push people into Islam, but just to make it known. We do not do as the Americans did, who kidnapped the Africans and brought them here as slaves and turned them from Islam to Christianity by force.

"A new world order is being planned today," he concludes. "It is being planned without Moslem participation. Our response to this is to see to it that there is a vibrant, alive, influential Islamic presence in this country, the one which makes world orders." The preacher's anger is all the more impressive for being perfectly controlled. "We can help by our presence to make an American order in the same way as America makes a world order. We will remain a minority—but are the Jews not a minority? They are *the* influential minority. *We* have to become the influential minority, because what we offer America is not to exploit it or be its masters, or take its billions or its military aid, but to establish a connection to God for it. We want the children of the Americans to be clean and pure. That is the relevance of Moslems in America. The sickness from which America suffers has its cure in the pharmacy of Islam and we as Moslems should make this known—come and take your medicine!"

And so the service is over. In the sociable crush following, the New Horizon and other chattering kids get pleasantly underfoot. All use English as segregated families are reunited, many to be answered by parents in Arabic or Urdu or Tagalog—how many adults have been able to grasp the *khutba*? Smiling again, Dr. Hathout is very busy accepting respectful greetings. Coins, greenbacks, and checks are being slipped into the *zakat* box. ❐

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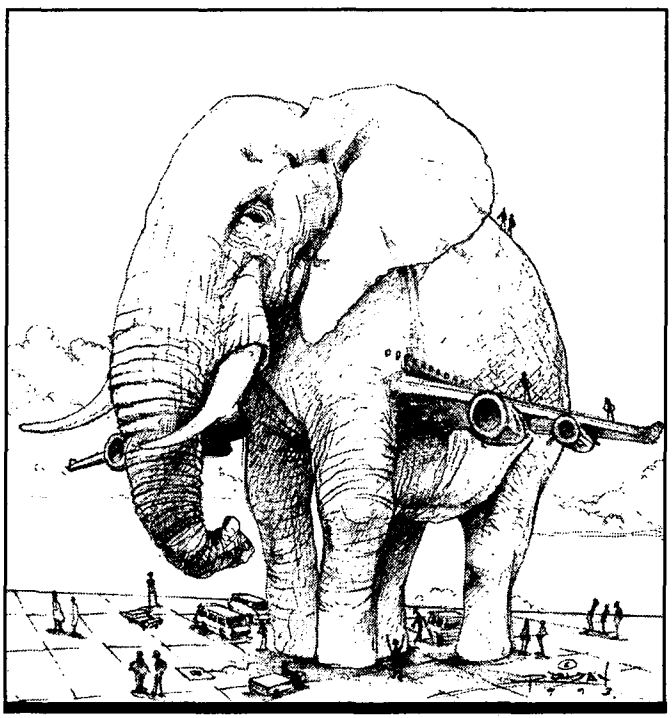
Michael Fumento

Federico's Folly

Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña got his job by wasting $10 billion on the biggest public works disaster of modern times—an airport worse in every way than the one it replaced.



"There is greatest practical benefit in making a few failures early in life." When Thomas Henry Huxley wrote that in *On Medical Education*, presumably he meant that mistakes were a learning experience. But in that strange twilight between politics and reality, sometimes mistakes themselves can be a benefit. Consider Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña's monumental mistake: the soon-to-be-completed Denver International Airport.

Both Peña and President Clinton cited Peña's efforts—as mayor of Denver from 1983 to 1991—to build the airport as a factor in Peña's appointment to the Department of Transportation. In his speech nominating Peña, Clinton said, "His legacy includes the new Denver International Airport, which I believe will be the largest in this country by a good ways." When Peña was picked to be the "cluster coordinator" for transportation issues during the transition period, a statement from the transition team declared that Peña had been involved in many projects to improve Denver's infrastructure, "including the construction of Denver International Airport, the world's largest [sic], to be finished in 1993."

Peña's explanation was that "Denver's investments paid off. I believe that's the reason for [my] being asked to do this."

But Denver's investments have not paid off, at least not for the city. While Peña promised to make Denver great, the city finds itself merely a great debtor, its jewels sewn into a massive tent-like structure on the windswept plains east of the city. Occupying a parcel of land twice the size of Manhattan, Denver International is the nation's largest public works project. Some have called it the nation's largest white elephant. Others have called it Federico's Folly.

At first billed as "the world's second-largest airport," it has steadily shrunk in size even as its budget has ballooned—from the $1.7 billion Denverites voted for to an actual cost of at least $10 billion. It appears that it will be worse in almost every practical way than the perfectly serviceable airport it is replacing. And the man responsible for it is now responsible for billions in federal transportation expenditures. As a reporter for Denver's *Rocky Mountain News* put it, "Clinton essentially said: Do what you did in Denver on a national scale."

Certainly Peña can't take all the credit for the airport. It was supported by both Denver newspapers as well as the governor and the entire Colorado congressional delegation. But it isn't for nothing that the route from the interstate to the airport will be named Peña

Michael Fumento covers national issues for Investor's Business Daily *and is author of* The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS, *republished this fall in an updated paperback edition by Regnery Gateway.*

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Boulevard. No blood test is necessary; Denver International is his baby.

And certainly the airport isn't the only reason Peña is in the cabinet. It has been widely suggested that Clinton—having met environmentalist resistance to appointing Hispanic Rep. Bill Richardson (D-N.M.) to the Interior Department position and instead appointing a very green but nonetheless white Bruce Babbitt—felt compelled to appoint a secretary of *transportación*. But if Peña couldn't have made it without the pedigree, he couldn't have made it without the airport, either. The Texas-born Peña, 46, has always had a knack for taking advantage of a situation. Although he benefits politically from his Hispanic surname, he is far from being of humble birth. True, his parents made their living from cotton—but not picking it, brokering it.

The Nightmare Before Christmas

Other than the overwhelming support he received from the city's Hispanic population, Peña probably owes his getting elected mayor to a Christmas Eve blizzard—the worst in sixty-nine years—that dumped almost three feet of snow on some parts of the city and tied the area up for days, making the incumbent look inept. But when a few years later a blizzard dumped a considerably smaller amount, again the city became snarled, this time because Peña had the novel idea of sending heavy city trucks out to simply pack down the snow by driving over it. All it did was create ruts, which then froze into place. Fortunately for him, it was not an election year.

Occupying a parcel of land twice the size of Manhattan, Denver International is the nation's largest public works project. Some have called it the nation's largest white elephant.

Fortuity also marked Peña's administration. Besides the airport, Clinton credited his nomination to the U.S. Conference of Mayors' having given Peña its City Livability Award for reducing its Clean Air Act violation days from "150 a year in the 1970s to 3 in 1990." But while violation days for Denver did drop from 125 in 1972 to three by the time Peña left office, they had already steadily declined to 31 the year *before* he was elected. Denver's air is cleaner for the same reason the air above every major U.S. city is cleaner: requirements of the 1970 Clean Air Act dramatically reduced automobile emissions.

Peña's tenure was marked by expensive megaprojects, ranging from hosting a Grand Prix to building a convention center and a baseball stadium. Far from attracting new bookings, as promised, the convention center has seen a tremendous drop in bookings since it opened, a decline that set in long before any talk of gay boycotts. The Grand Prix was a flop. For two years it tied downtown traffic in knots, for which Denver had the privilege of handing over $2.5 million in tax revenues to the promoter. The baseball stadium is still under construction. Peña said the common theme of these projects was to help pull America's 23rd largest city out of an economic slump and to make it one of the country's most spectacular. As he exhorted in a newspaper commentary, "Denver is poised for greatness. As the alliance forged by the broad coalition of airport supporters continues its work on advancing Denver into the future, there is no end to what we can accomplish, or how high we can fly."

Critics say, however, that the common theme was for Peña to soak the citizens by handing over city funds to businesses, especially contractors, that took advantage of Denverites' self-consciousness about being a "cow town," and worries over a temporary job bust at the end of an oil boom. Chief among those critics is *Rocky Mountain News* columnist Gene Amole, who has inveighed incessantly (some say obsessively) against the new airport. Commented Amole in a 1989 column, "The way the whole thing is shaking out is that big government, big business, big labor, big developers and the big media are one side, and the little guys who actually live in this town are on the other."

Flight Delay Fibbery

Peña's airport plan began in 1985, when after months of secret discussions he announced that instead of expanding Stapleton International, the current airport, the city would build a new one. He gave two reasons. First, flight delays, especially in bad weather, were allegedly becoming intolerable at Stapleton, costing it business as a hub. Peña said Stapleton was "an embarrassing bottleneck, both in our national transportation system and our ability to have an efficiently run airport to build a strong, stable economy." Second, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) projections indicated that if passenger use of Stapleton continued to escalate as it had in the first part of the 1980s, and if Stapleton didn't expand, then early in the twenty-first century the airport would no longer be able to handle the traffic.

Yet Stapleton *was* in the process of expanding. Even after Peña began his airport campaign, Stapleton built a new runway, a new concourse, and a new commuter terminal.

Moreover, Stapleton's flight-delay record in recent years has been among the best in the nation. According to the Federal Aviation Administration, in the year the airport was submitted to a referendum, 1989, Stapleton had 27 flight operations per thousand delayed fifteen minutes or more. By comparison, Atlanta's Hartsfield International, which has only one hub, had 25, New York's JFK had 76, Chicago O'Hare 88, Newark 98, and LaGuardia 115. Two years earlier, in a 1987 report, the city itself boasted that "Denver ranks below most other major U.S. airports in number of delays per thousand flights. In fact, the national average for delays went *up* in 1986. Denver's average went *down*."

Instead of looking at the actual data, however, the city cited a five-year-old 1984 FAA projection. The problem with the projection was that it couldn't have taken into account that Stapleton added a new runway in 1986. While not full-length, it freed up the longer runways to handle more large jets, and

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significantly eased congestion. Critics have contended that this runway could have been made longer, but that Peña, having already decided to go with the new airport, prevented it. Airport officials say that existing structures prevented it from being made any longer, though one could argue that compared to the billions of dollars the new airport would cost, relocating those facilities would have been a bargain.

Further, yet another runway was planned for Stapleton, to be built on the adjoining Rocky Mountain Arsenal, which would have increased capacity and decreased delays even further. Peña blocked its construction, along with that of terminal improvements. He initially said it was because the money should be devoted to a new airport. Later, though, city officials said it was because the Arsenal land was too polluted. Denver International critic Michael Boyd, president of Aviation Systems Research Corporation, a Colorado consulting company, responds that this doesn't ring very true. "Now they are going to put a park there," he says.

The main cause of the delays Stapleton does have is that, during winter bad weather, airport officials will sometimes shut down one runway for fear of interfering with planes on another nearby runway. (Inclement weather has closed the airport as a whole only three times in its history.) Ironically, due to an FAA error in applying sea-level standards to a mile-high airport, the runways at the new airport have also been built too close together to comply with regulations for full flexibility in simultaneous take-offs and landings. To resolve the problem, the airport will use "quick-scan" radar to efficiently keep track of flights. This type of radar, though relatively new, was already in use when the building of Denver International began. Although the distance between the new airport runways is still greater than that between Stapleton's, this system would also have helped smooth out operations at Stapleton. Said Boyd, "It would have given Stapleton the same capacity that the new airport is supposed to have."

In selling the airport idea to Congress, Peña said that eliminating the alleged delays at Stapleton would save the airline industry $120 million a year in operating costs. But according to Aviation Systems Research Corporation figures, with emplanement figures going up an estimated $9.50 per person, at 15 million passengers in 1994 the increased cost to save that $120 million will be $142.5 million.

Where Have All the Passengers Gone?

In the early 1980s, as a result of deregulation and lower fares, the airline business boomed and hubs did especially well. Stapleton's traffic reached a record-high 34.7 million passengers, and the FAA predicted a steady increase in Denver traffic to 72 million by the end of the century, with Denver becoming the nation's second-busiest airport.

But the FAA didn't realize that the sudden burst in airline ridership was essentially a one-time explosion, and it failed to look at the trends in airport hubbing. Long before the first shovel of dirt was dug at the new airport site, it was becoming clear that the superhub concept was in danger. The same deregulation that led to vastly increased ridership led to decentralization of hubs. In 1978, when the airlines were deregulated, there were only four hubs. By 1990 there were thirty-five, many of which had lower landing fees than Stapleton's and were siphoning off business.

An Aviation Systems study warned that the "political focus" on building superfluous hubs was threatening to make "airport building the S&L scandal of the 1990s." It noted that there is excess potential hub capacity already, including Kansas City, Dayton, and Atlanta, and that the big dollars are going to megaprojects like Denver's, while "small cities must literally beg to get an instrument landing system" budgeted to their airports. Denver International, said the report, was characteristic of the fact that "America is planning new airports for the 1980s, not the 21st century."

"The way the whole thing is shaking out is that big government, big business, big labor, big developers and the big media are one side, and the little guys who actually live in this town are on the other."

Also contributing to the decline was the folding in 1986 of Frontier Airlines, one of the three airlines using Stapleton as a hub. Backers of the new airport have never even claimed that they could get an airline to take Frontier's place as a third hub. By 1990, usage of Stapleton had dropped about 20 percent below its high point. While Stapleton traffic began picking up slowly in 1991 and increased an additional 9 percent last year, it is still operating at only half its capacity. And most likely, building the new airport will end up *reducing* air traffic through Denver.

To sustain themselves, airports need to charge fees to the airlines, which are worked into the cost of airline tickets. The current rate at Stapleton equates to a little less than $6.00, and originally Denver International proponents claimed it would be no higher at the new airport. Now the number airport analysts are tossing around is $15.50, which is based on a steady increase in passengers over those currently using Stapleton. The magic number is $20, since the new airport's contracts with both United and Continental allow them to terminate or renegotiate at that point. Presumably they would do the latter, and extract even greater concessions from the airport at an even greater cost. Some critics of the new airport claim that the $20 mark is almost inevitable, and may even be exceeded. When airport officials negotiated gate leases with American Airlines, they insisted on upping the $20 threshold to $25.

Aside from affecting airlines' abilities to terminate or renegotiate their contracts, the higher fees could encourage passengers to route their trips through other cities, leading to a "death spiral": higher fees resulting in fewer passengers

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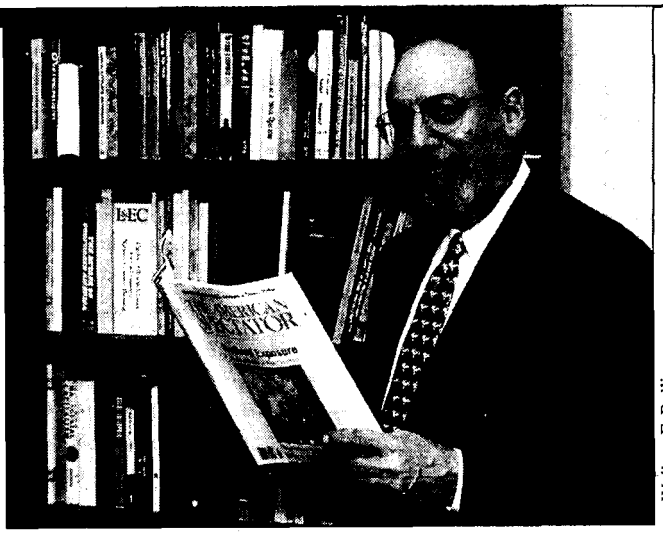

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resulting in higher fees, and so on. About 55 percent of Stapleton's passengers are classified as connecting, and to connecting passengers one airport is usually as good as another. Thus, independent of air traffic trends, the new airport could be slicing its own throat.

But passengers originating out of Denver will be the real sufferers. Consider the cost of flying round-trip for a three-day weekend to Los Angeles, currently available at the best rates for about $200. The new airport has already raised that cost by $3, will probably raise it by another $15 or more in airline fees, and by $18 in parking costs or $60 in cab fare. (More on the increased parking and cab fares later.) For the vacationer who parks, the airport has increased the cost of his trip by 18 percent over the original ticket price; for someone taking a cab it has increased 40 percent. Such increases can have a tremendous effect on such an elastic commodity as leisure airline travel.

Noted a spokesman for the Air Transport Association in Washington, "The marketplace is very sensitive to increased ticket costs." He said, "We see business loss for every dollar that fares increase." Indeed, the cut-rate Southwest Airlines, which specializes in relatively short hops, has said it will not use the new airport because the per-passenger costs are too high. (It should be noted, however, that Southwest is not currently flying out of Stapleton, either.)

The economics of the new airport are so bad that even if it were completed it would be fiscally smarter to just let it rot and to continue to use Stapleton, using Stapleton profits to pay off the bonds.

In December 1990, Continental filed for bankruptcy protection, putting in doubt whether it would ever operate out of a new airport—although more recently it said it is fairly confident of pulling out of the red. In February 1991, the FAA released new traffic projections for the new airport, saying that by 2000 it would be the nation's fifth-busiest, rather than the second-busiest, with 44 million passengers a year rather than the 72 million it had earlier predicted. At about the same time, citing the Persian Gulf War and the ailing airline industry, Peña scaled back the new airport from 94 gates to 85. It now stands at 88, twenty fewer than Stapleton has. Denver International will open with five jet runways, compared to the six at Stapleton. As airport officials admit, the lower number of gates is because even many of the Stapleton gates were no longer needed for lack of air traffic. They do point out that many of the new gates are wider than those at Stapleton, giving them great flexibility.

Thus, even as the airport budget ballooned, the size shrank, leading Gene Amole to dub it "The Incredible Shrinking Airport." Still billed as the second-largest airport in the world, in fact it had become the second-largest in Denver. (And the claim of second-largest was never much more than an ego stroke. It is not based on passenger capacity or flights handled, but on *acreage*, as the airport's few structures and runways are surrounded by a vast expanse of land for which the city paid dearly. This is like putting a refrigerator into an otherwise empty convention center and calling it the world's largest kitchen.)

The bottom line is that last year Stapleton produced revenues of about $164 million, while Denver International will need at least $340 million to break even. If it doesn't, it won't be able to pay off its bond obligations. When pressed on this possibility, Aviation Director George Doughty said flatly, "If the airport revenues are inadequate, the bonds will not be repaid." This sounds like an easy out for the city, but it could devastate its ability to sell bonds in the future. The bondholders don't seem particularly worried, since the bonds are currently selling above their face value. But at least one bond-rating agency, Kemper Securities, Inc., rates the bonds at lower BBB, one rank above junk.

The economics of the new airport are so bad that even if it were completed it would be fiscally smarter to just let it rot and to continue to use Stapleton, using Stapleton profits to pay off the bonds. The idea of the public demanding a switch back to Stapleton is one that city officials seem to fear—they are allowing Continental to close up its maintenance facility and transfer 1,500 jobs out of state rather than to continue to let it operate by ferrying planes from Denver International to Stapleton. Asked why an airport built "in order to create jobs" would prompt such a thing, Continental corporate affairs spokesman Dave Messing said, "It was felt it would be a foot in the door to the possible resurrection of passenger service at Stapleton."

Reading Peña's Lips

Peña adamantly opposed submitting the airport to a referendum, as did Gov. Roy Romer in 1988 when he threatened to "roll over" and "crush" any attempt to let the people decide on the project. But influential state politicians threatened to start a petition drive and city council members threatened to block the project if no referendum were held, and Peña and Romer backed down.

Business interests behind the airport managed to raise four times as much money as the opposition and the referendum—worded to begin, "In order to create more jobs . . ."—passed handily. Responding to a lawsuit, the Greater Denver Corporation, an arm of the local Chamber of Commerce, later released a list of political contributors to the airport for which it had served as a funnel. The greatest contributors by far were the area utilities, with US West Communications giving $400,000 and the electric utility, Public Service Company, kicking in $300,000. As their ability to make such heavy political contributions indicates, the Colorado legislature allows both utilities to use their monopoly status to reap exceptionally large profits, and both saw the new airport as a cash cow. City council member Dave Doering, a strong supporter of the new airport, nevertheless argued in 1990 that

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the city was entering into a "sweetheart deal for the utilities," in which Public Service would remove high voltage lines at a cost to the utility of about $16-20 million, but in exchange would gain up to $170 million over the next twenty years. He favored either generating power on-site on land adjacent to airport land or at least having the city own the utility equipment at the airport rather than "permanently lock the airport into a higher tariff." He lost. Sweetheart deal or no, Denver's power usage is estimated to increase by a third from 1991 to 1994, almost exclusively due to the new airport. As for US West, it has already netted a $24 million dollar fiber-optics wiring contract from the airport, and there could be plenty more where that came from.

One owner of land adjacent to the airport site that stood to make a fortune selling to hotels and other businesses contributed $95,000 to Greater Denver. This was the infamous Silverado Savings & Loan, co-directed by George Bush's son Neil.

A more direct beneficiary was MDC Holdings, a major contributor not only to Greater Denver but to Peña's mayoral campaign. The state attorney general found in an investigation that MDC had sold the city 100 acres for the airport. He also found that "MDC Holdings and its officials committed numerous criminal violations" in raising political funds for the airport by "extorting" subcontractors to raise contributions, but that the company could not be prosecuted because the statute of limitations had expired. MDC contributed big amounts to the 1987 mayoral campaigns of both Peña and his Republican opponent. The Greater Denver Corporation also got a direct piece of the action when the city, without going through the bidding process, gave it $325,000 to promote the airport.

As a reporter for Denver's Rocky Mountain News *put it, "Clinton essentially said: Do what you did in Denver on a national scale."*

The most effective tool for ensuring a healthy margin of victory for the airport was simply lying to the electorate as to what it was getting and what it was going to be paying for it. The referendum stated that the price of the airport would be $1.7 billion. But shortly after the vote, an investigation by a *Rocky Mountain News* reporter showed that the city had actually hidden $281 million in construction costs for an automated baggage system, and that the city knew about this before the vote but simply left it off the claimed price tag. Other costs that the city should have known about were also left out of calculations. Both United and Continental conducted independent evaluations and estimated that the actual amount that would be needed would be $2.7 billion. Aviation Director George Doughty scoffed at the projections, saying the only way it would cost that much was "if you gold-plate the terminal building." Alas, the city's official figure is now $2.7 billion with no gold plate in the terminal to show for it. Doughty resigned last year.

But the mushrooming from $1.7 billion to $2.7 billion wasn't the worst of it. It turned out those figures included only design, construction, and construction management. It did not include such "incidental" items as the purchase of the land itself or capitalized interest on the bond debt. Though the city has upped its figure only to $3 billion, the actual amount budgeted to be expended by opening day is now about $4.4 billion. Further, City Auditor Bob Crider's annual report includes $5.6 billion in bond interest, hardly an incidental cost. All of which pushes costs to about $10 billion, or almost six times what voters were told the project would cost.

And even that figure could rise. The airport has now fallen behind schedule. Earlier this year, the official opening date was moved from October to December. As this article goes to press, the date has been pushed back even further—to March 9, at the earliest. Meanwhile, starting in January, the city will be paying $500,000 a *day* in interest on outstanding bonds on the airport.

Peña presented the costs as practically irrelevant, since Denverites weren't going to have to pay. In commentaries printed in both local newspapers he wrote, "The airport is user-funded. Denver taxpayers will not be required to support its construction or operation." But although Coloradans would end up paying little for the airport in direct taxes, they would be clobbered by other costs.

Part of Peña's free lunch scheme was to wrest a $501-million commitment from the federal government in 1990. The local papers celebrated his coup in getting the whole country to pay for Denver's airport. There was only a hint that Denverites might have to pay back that money through a surcharge on passengers, and Peña quickly squelched it. "Right now, we don't intend to impose a surcharge because there is no need for it. Today we do not contemplate it. It's a possibility but I don't want to speculate on hypothetical circumstances," he said. Two years later, the hypothetical circumstances kicked in, with Denverites and those changing planes at Stapleton paying a $3 head tax, which will probably remain in effect for the next three decades.

Thus, far from not costing Denverites more, the new airport began costing them more a year before the structure was even scheduled to open. The $3 doesn't count against the maximum of $20 per passenger allowed in the contracts with United and Continental, and makes Denver International even less competitive.

As the Crow Flies

Coloradans will pay most dearly for the airport—trip after trip, year after year—in the time and the money it will take to use it. City Hall had told voters that the new airport was to be 18 miles from the center of downtown. But when

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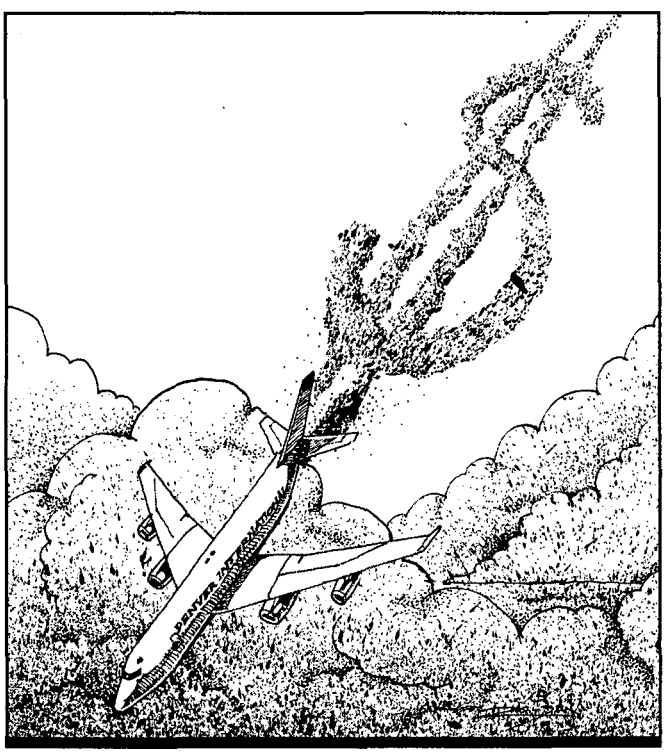
someone actually measured the distance, they found it would be a 24.5-mile trip. The city responded that the 18 miles was "as the crow flies." With a certain degree of chutzpah, Peña said that before the referendum he had made it no secret that the distance was "between 23 and 24 miles," yet even for some time after the *News* exposé the city continued to use the 18-mile figure in press releases, fact sheets, and reports on the airport. Finally, it began using a figure of 23 miles.

By contrast, Stapleton is 5.5 miles from downtown. The 24.5-mile distance will make the downtown-to-airport distance the second most remote in the nation, with only Washington's Dulles beating out Denver International, by six-tenths of a mile. And Dulles, near a major population center in Northern Virginia, is more convenient for some users; Denver International is farther away from virtually everybody. Moreover, Washingtonians have the option of using close-in National Airport, three miles from downtown, and many of them do use it rather than trekking out to Dulles. Indeed, every city that has an airport more than 18 miles driving distance from downtown has a second full-service airport less than 11 miles from the city center.



At current Denver cab rates—$1.20 to $1.40 a mile—the fare to the airport will be $68 to $79 per round trip, including a 15 percent tip. Denverites who try to save cab fare will face another unpleasant surprise. In its need to raise about three times as much money for operational costs as Stapleton needs, the city will probably be charging $10 a day with no cheaper rates for satellite parking. That compares to $4.00 currently for satellite parking at Stapleton.

Peña shouldn't have said that Denver taxpayers wouldn't pay for the airport, but rather that they wouldn't pay for it through the tax system. Yet even that would not have been entirely correct. The city had to forgive $40 million of United Airlines' bond debt as a lease concession, meaning $40 million less coming into its coffers. Then, the state was forced to kick in $5 million in tax funds for roads connecting to the new airport, with another $5 million coming from local governments. This despite Peña's earlier claim that the roads to the airport would already be paid for. A study commissioned by a local group opposing the airport also reported that, "The remote location of DIA will result each year in approximately 800 million more automobile miles driven, six to 10 more lives lost in traffic accidents and tons of exhaust fumes added to Denver's brown cloud."

As to what will become of the land on which Stapleton sits, no one knows. In its original bond prospectus, the city said that even after clean-up costs it expected to get $100 million for Stapleton. But there is no market price for old airports and the city has no idea to whom it will sell it, especially with Lowry Air Force base scheduled to shut down in 1994 and become another large tract of unused land. The city has since lowered its expectations to $75 million for Stapleton, and Denver officials are saying it would probably take millions of dollars of infrastructure investment and inducements to attract users. It will be a daunting project. Stapleton is six times the size of Denver's entire downtown.

It is not a foregone conclusion that Denver International will be a flop. While nothing can possibly make it more convenient and less expensive than Stapleton, unforeseen shifts in airport use patterns may allow it to run at a profit. But unforeseen fortuities will not change the fact that Coloradans were continually and apparently intentionally misled.

Late in 1989, by which time it was becoming clear that what Denverites had voted for and what they were going to get were two different animals, some began to demand a second vote. Peña refused, saying it was "not required and would serve no point." An April 1991 poll showed 51 percent would vote against the airport if the issue were on the ballot then, although 70 percent said that since the building had begun, it should be carried through. Peña needn't have been a physics expert to know that such a huge force once set in motion would be virtually unstoppable, no matter what the consequences.

So far, Peña too has been an unstoppable force. In any profit-making business in the world he would have been dumped unceremoniously from his job. But in the world of politics, having already risen to his Peter Principle level of incompetence in a medium-sized city, he found himself yanked right up near the top leadership post in the nation.

Nevertheless, there are those, such as Aviation Systems' Boyd, who argues that Peña's ability to sell a dog like Denver International is what made him such an ideal choice for the Clinton administration. Said Boyd, "It was built on promises that were never kept, and statistics that were totally inaccurate, and it will cost an enormous amount of money." ❐

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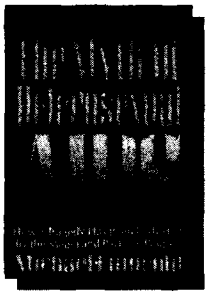

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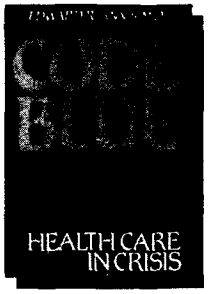

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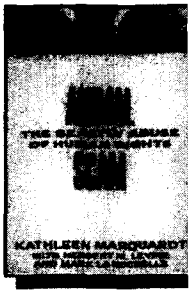

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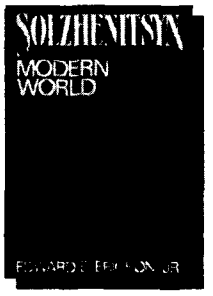

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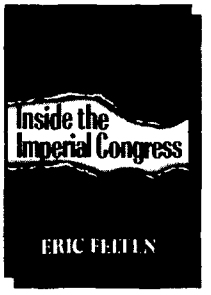

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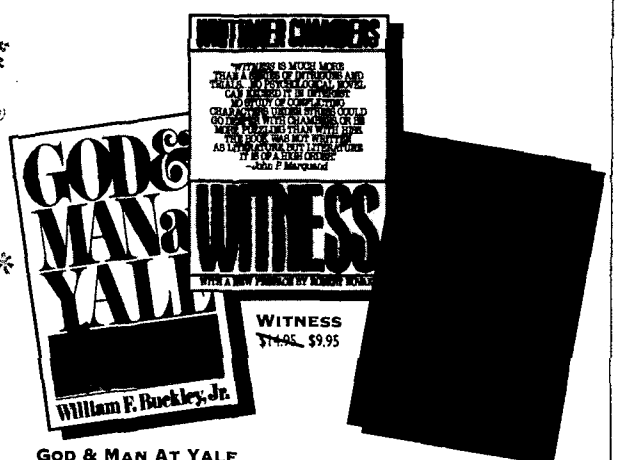

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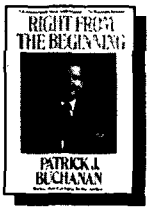

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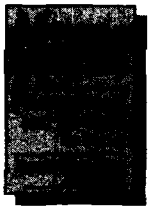

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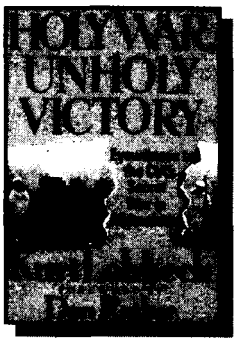

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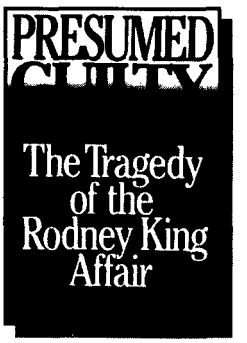

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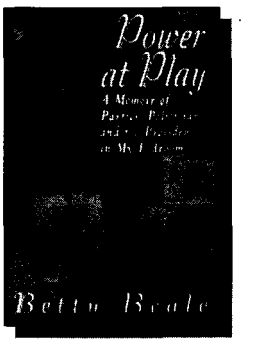

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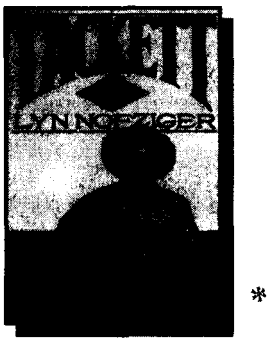

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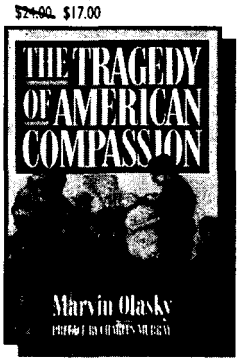

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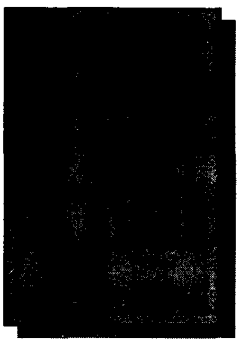

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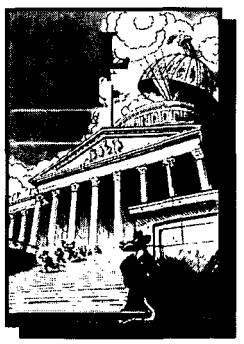

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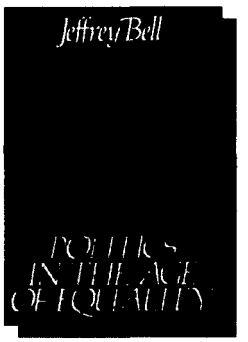

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Edith Wharton's Abuser

by Kenneth S. Lynn

Martin Scorsese's version of Edith Wharton's portrait of post–Civil War New York society in *The Age of Innocence* opens with a scene at the opera in which the novelist's disdain for the society's lack of critical discernment is made abundantly clear. Actually, Wharton's condemnation does an injustice to the culture of Old New York. If I mention it here it is only because it applies so well to the scandalous failure of modern-day Wharton scholarship to face up to the truth about its most honored document—R.W.B. Lewis's Bancroft Prize–winning, Pulitzer Prize–winning best seller, *Edith Wharton: A Biography* (1975). Only from an issue-raising assessment in the *Yale Review* by the poet, playwright, essayist, and translator Richard Howard and from two detailed letters to the (London) *Times Literary Supplement* from Lewis's erstwhile research assistants, Marion Mainwaring and Mary Pitlick—whom he had glowingly referred to in *Edith Wharton* as "something closer to collaborators" than assistants, in tribute to Mainwaring's "extraordinarily productive work in France" and Pitlick's "range of participation in the work" and "extremely rewarding consultations"—have we been able to gain a sense of how profoundly corrupt this book is. As Mainwaring recently remarked in an interview in the *New York Observer*, "Lewis's biography of Wharton is a sort of Watergate in American literary scholarship."[1] A largely covered-up Watergate, alas.

That *Edith Wharton* has so many steadfast admirers, that its formulations have been incorporated wholesale into the work of other commentators on the novelist (for a recent instance, see John Updike's *New Yorker* essay of October 4), has several explanations, ranging from the difficulties of checking up on a book with no footnotes and an erratic index to the mountebank trickiness of Lewis's arguments to the effusive compliments to other critics and scholars of American literature that for forty years and more have been a signature of his professional personality. But the key to the biographer's success is the approval he has enjoyed throughout his career from left-tilted opinion makers in literary journalism and academia. His views have always made perfect sense to them, and their views in turn have been eagerly endorsed by him.

A recent example of the latter concordance was Lewis's review in the *New York Times* last summer of the "beautifully informed" essays of that "treasure of state," Gore Vidal. "The moment I salute most warmly," said Lewis, "is his memory (and ours) of a televised 'live chat' with William F. Buckley Jr. at the Republican National Convention in 1968, when Mr. Vidal, as he says, 'came close to revealing what I really am: a dedicated anti-anti-communist.' " "Say it again," Lewis fervently added. Buckley's acute response appeared three months later in *National Review*:

> We are, I think, entitled to wonder whether Professor Lewis's extraordinary endorsement of the Vidal position presages a cultural revisionism. If so it would be a change of enormous cultural consequence. The Solzhenitsyns and Koestlers would freeze into history as the moral blind men, deferring to the strategic foresight and moral pre-eminence of such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Pablo Picasso, and other fellow-travelers and accommodationists.[2]

Kenneth S. Lynn, who has taught English at Harvard and history at Johns Hopkins, is currently at work on a life-and-times book about Charlie Chaplin.

[1] Mainwaring has been in the news of late because of her addition of an ending and smaller interpolated passages to a reissue of Wharton's unfinished novel, *The Buccaneers* (Viking, $22), a chronicle of the romantic adventures of a group of wealthy American girls in aristocratic English society in the 1870s. Thanks to Mainwaring's mimetic gifts as a stylist and her scholarly knowledge of what might be termed the "furniture" of society life in Victorian England, as well as to the guidance provided by a synopsis of the plot of the novel that Wharton left behind her, the transition from Wharton's story-telling to hers is smooth. I am bound to say, though, that I deplore Mainwaring's decision to eliminate Wharton's "[references] to race in terms offensive to modern readers." By which she means Wharton's repeated use of the word "nigger." Does Mainwaring advocate, I wonder, similar bowdlerizations of *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*? Would she foist Native-American Joe upon us, and African-American Jim?

[2] Buckley also took this occasion to publish his correspondence with Lewis in 1969-70, centering around Lewis's entreaties to Buckley to come to Yale as a guest of Calhoun College, where Lewis was master. ("You write the nicest letters," Buckley was moved to exclaim at one point.) But the day before Buckley was scheduled to arrive, April 24, 1970, Lewis phoned to recommend against his showing up. For the forthcoming trial in New Haven of Black Panther chief Bobby Seale, the outbreaks of protest over that trial by much of the Yale student body, and the doubts raised by President Kingman Brewster of Yale that the trial would be "fair" had created an inflammatory situation on campus that made it impossible for the university to guarantee Buckley's personal safety. Buckley's further recollection of that phone

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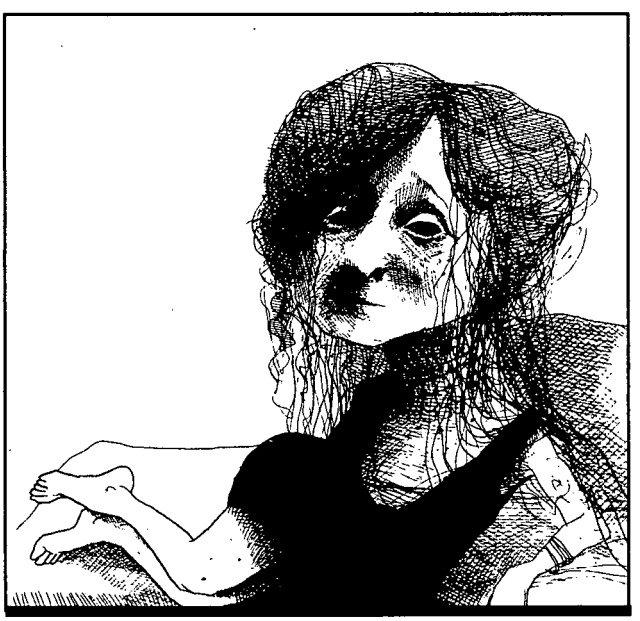
My own awareness of the sort of scholar—and the sort of man—Lewis is took shape almost forty years ago. As a newly-fledged assistant professor of English at Harvard, I undertook to review his first book, *The American Adam* (1955). "One of Mr. Lewis's most striking characteristics," I noted right off, was "his gratitude—*The American Adam* is replete with enthusiastic expressions of [his] indebtedness to the work of others." Even more striking than his sycophancy were his errors. "At first," I wrote, "they seem like slips of the tongue, but as the errors multiply, charitable explanations vanish." Getting dates and proper names wrong was the *spécialité de la maison*. But the error that really flabbergasted me cropped up in the discussion of Thoreau. Lewis depicted the Walden Pond cabin-dweller "tearing a woodchuck apart with his fingers and eating it raw"—whereas the Transcendentalist point about this most abstemious writer and woodland creatures is that he never ate one alive (or cooked, for that matter); he only savored the concept of wildness contained in the idea of doing so.

Between 1820 and 1860, Lewis argued, a clash of ideas occurred in the young American republic concerning the nature of Crèvecoeur's "new man," the American. The clashing outlooks of a radiantly forward-looking party of Hope, to which Emerson and Thoreau belonged, and a more pessimistic party of Memory occupied center stage in the American mind, although the visions offered by an imaginatively powerful third party, the party of Irony, with which Hawthorne and Melville were associated, also played a vital role. Out of the "lively interplay of all three [parties]," Lewis asserted, there emerged the myth figure of the "authentic American," emancipated from history, democratically undefiled by inheritance and fundamentally innocent: the American Adam.



But there was no center-stage drama or tripartite interplay in *The American Adam*, I discovered, for Lewis had dropped the party of Memory down an Orwellian memory hole. Who its members had been was left shrouded in mystery. The question, of course, is why, and the answer is more obvious to me today than it was in 1955. If instead of never once mentioning Washington Irving, Lewis had had the honesty to attempt an explanation of the enormous popularity in pre-1860 America of the anti-modern, old age–loving author of *Rip Van Winkle*; if he had examined Edgar Allan Poe's hatred of the cult of progress, detestation of the democratic mob, and scorn for the idea that because Negroes are "like ourselves the sons of Adam, [they] must therefore have like passions and wants and feelings"; if he had acknowledged that the antebellum humorists of Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi were Whigs who regarded the backwoods antecedents of the Snopeses whom they made fun of in their stories as fearfully satanic and not at all Adamic, then claims about the American mind's ravishment by personal images of unfallen innocence would have had to be drastically curtailed. In the guise of analyzing a cultural myth, the left-liberal Lewis had constructed one.

"You're going to receive a certain amount of flak about this," my senior Harvard colleague Perry Miller remarked after reading my review. "What makes you so sure?" I asked. Miller was a giant figure in American Studies, with a mind of breathtaking subtlety. Yet it was often his habit to speak bluntly. "Dick Lewis," he replied, "is an assiduous flatterer. [I euphemize.] When assiduous flatterers are attacked, they generally get their friends to do their fighting for them." Miller's prophecy proved accurate. Professor Daniel Aaron of Smith College put aside his labors on a book about American writers on the left—wherein criticisms of writers on the left were being studiously avoided—and penned a letter of protest to the magazine in which my review appeared, and Murray Kempton also wrote. Both Kempton and Aaron, I then remembered, had been thanked with "special gratitude" in the acknowledgments of *The American Adam* for their "generous assistance." Eight years later the memory of my review was still bothering the English critic Frank Kermode. While my family and I were staying with friends in the south of France, Kermode appeared on the scene and under most inappropriate circumstances began berating me for my treatment of that splendid piece of work, *The American Adam*. (By way of a postscript to that last anecdote, I might add that some months ago the editors of the *New*

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call was that Lewis was "deeply distressed by the activity of the students." In a letter two weeks later, addressed to "Dear Bill" and signed "Dick," Lewis assured him that the letter that Buckley had written to the *Yale Daily News* about Lewis's disinvitation had certainly "contained nothing that would offend anybody not so offense-prone as to be maniacal," and he spoke of "inviting you [to Calhoun] next fall as early as you can make it." The invitation, however, was never issued. In 1991, Buckley wrote Lewis to say that he had been asked to contribute to an oral history of Yale in the period 1950-1977—i.e., during the presidencies of A. Whitney Griswold and Kingman Brewster. Out of a desire, said Buckley, to give a completely accurate account of how it was that he had failed to become a guest of Calhoun College, he would appreciate it if Lewis would "confirm my story (or re-educate me) on the subject." Lewis did not favor him with the courtesy of a reply. A few weeks later, Buckley wrote him a second letter. But "I never did hear again from Professor R. W. B. Lewis. From Dick." In 1969-70, Lewis had wanted something from Buckley, and he couldn't have been more cordial. In 1991, Buckley wanted something from him, and Lewis wouldn't even give him the time of day.

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York Times Book Review published a review by Kermode of a collection of Lewis's essays. Can it be that the editors did not know of Kermode's intense admiration for Lewis until they received the after-dinner toast he sent them, complete with sidebar salutes to *The American Adam* and *Edith Wharton*? In the words of the Duke of Wellington, if you can believe that, you can believe anything.)

Lewis is "a careless writer," Richard Howard observed in his *Yale Review* review of *Edith Wharton*. "There are 76 'typographical' errors, mostly in the spelling of French words, though also in the failure to recognize such solecisms as 'predelictions' (which occurs three times)." A mangled allusion to Franz Liszt's mistress, the Comtesse d'Agoult, as the "Comtesse Dacou" and misspellings of the names of Braque and Derain were not reassuring, the urbane reviewer went on to say, and he confessed distress about a reference to the Harvard scholar Charles Eliot Norton's production of "what became a standard prose translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia*," when in fact Norton translated the *Vita Nuova* into prose and advised Longfellow on the latter's verse translation of the *Commedia*.

At the outset of his comments on Lewis's psychologizing, Howard quoted the resounding sentences with which the biography ushers young Edith into adolescence in the mid-1870s:

> Her conscious mind seems never to have grasped the cause of what she would describe as a "choking agony of terror." Yet who was waiting, ominously, inside the house—ready perhaps to scold, humiliate, frighten, and increase the anxiety in the child's eyes—but her own mother?

"Who indeed?" Howard asked with a trace of mockery, and with a trace more he added, "One scarcely needs the acknowledgment to Erik Erikson for this kind of cliff-hanging analysis."

Yet one of the many oddities about *Edith Wharton* is that in a text of 532 pages in which the novelist is 40 by page 105, Erikson's self-proclaimed disciple vouchsafed himself too little space for adequate exhibitions of developmental psychodramas. Richard Howard lamented—or pretended to lament—"missed opportunities," but limited space is obviously what Lewis wanted. For the psychodramas he features have been manufactured out of swift manipulations of scanty facts, omissions of lengthier contradictory facts, pumped-up rhetoric, and bluff.

Take, for instance, Lewis's strong implication in the foregoing quote that the agony of terror from which Wharton suffered in her childhood was rooted in the traumatic scoldings, humiliations, and other abuses visited upon her by a Gothic ogress of a mother. What is truly disgusting about this implication is that it flies in the face of Wharton's touching expression of gratitude to her mother and father for helping her through her agony. Lewis could very well have been confident that most of his readers would never learn of this testimonial, for it is contained in an unpublished autobiographical fragment called "Life and I."

When Wharton was nine, two child playmates of hers gave her a story of robbers and ghosts to read, as she lay in bed convalescing from a life-threatening attack of typhoid fever. "With my intense Celtic sense of the supernatural," Wharton writes, the story led her into "a world haunted by formless horrors." Off and on, her "hallucinations lasted seven or eight years." At this point in her narrative comes the tribute to her parents:

> I owe them the deepest gratitude for their treatment of me during this difficult phase. They made as light of my fears as they could without hurting my feelings; but they never scolded or ridiculed me for them, or tried to "harden" me by making me sleep in the dark, or doing any of the things which are supposed to give courage to timid children. I believe it is owing to their kindness and forbearance that my terror gradually wore off, & that I became what I am now—a woman hardly conscious of physical fear.

Like Lewis's other stunts, the complete omission of this material is a symbol of his immersion not in the fascinating facts of Wharton's life but in the fantasies of his ideologically driven mind, wherein victimization equates with virtue and a wealthy, socially privileged mother (maiden name, Rhinelander) is bound to be a moral monster.

As an 11-year-old, Lewis relates, Edith decided to write a novel. Like a good many of the fictions of her maturity, it established an upper-class milieu on the very first page:

> "Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Brown?" said Mrs. Tomkins. "If only I had known you were going to call I should have tidied up the drawing room."

Edith brought the page to her mother. After reading it, her mother handed it back with the observation that "drawing rooms are always tidy." Edith was crushed. Our horror-mongering biographer makes a big deal out of this.

Yet the mother's criticism, however untactful, certainly did not reflect a lack of interest or pride in Edith's literary bent. One example of her feelings is the notebook she kept of her daughter's poetic writings, which led her when Edith was 16 to make a selection of her verses and have them privately printed at Newport. And then there is the charming story Wharton tells in "Life and I"—but

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Lewis ignores—of the period in her very young childhood in which she associated "the art of fiction with the printed page before I could decipher a word of the latter":

> I did not want to *tell* the stories I was forever inventing, I wanted to *read* them aloud, & every day for hours I paced the nursery floor, engaged in the absorbing occupation of reading these inexhaustible tales from a book which, as often as not, I held upside down, but of which I never failed to turn the pages. This strange pursuit was called "making up," & was carried on long after I learned to read, & always book in hand. My mother often tried to note down the narratives I poured out, but I "read aloud" so fast that she was never able to capture more than a few words.

There are two levels of revelation about her relations with her mother in this passage. On the first, we witness a mother's delight in her daughter's prodigious and precocious imagination and her frantic efforts to preserve her outpourings. On the second we learn something about power in the nursery. Wharton was no less self-dramatizing than Hemingway. Possibly because she was such a headstrong and imperious woman, it was sometimes her conceit to portray the child she once had been as a shrinking violet who meekly took orders from her mother. There are certain recollections, however, in which one can glimpse a very different picture, a picture that suggests that the woman who rode over Henry James like a Sherman tank had been a very headstrong child as well. This recollection is one of them. Her mother would like her to slow the pace of her talk so she can capture all the words on paper. But the child, glorying in the flood-tide of her inventiveness, races heedlessly on. What was her mother in this context, after all, but an incompetent secretary?

In the index to *Edith Wharton*, there is a reference that directs us to page 29 for an example of the "anti-intellectualism" of Wharton's mother. The example turns out to consist of a statement that, out of a felt need to exercise some sort of control on her daughter's amazing appetite for books, she "took the easy path of forbidding her to read any new fiction at all." But while this grand lady

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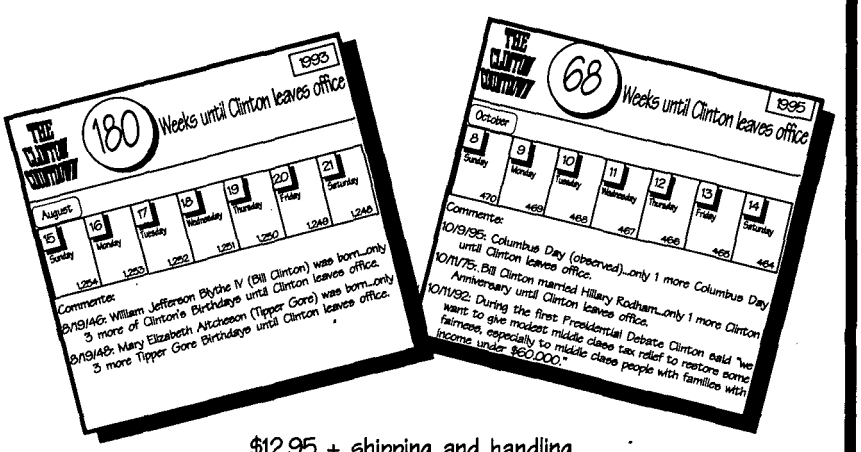
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1993
August
Comments:
8/9/46: William Jefferson Blythe IV (Bill Clinton) was born...only 3 more of Clinton's Birthdays until Clinton leaves office.
8/9/48: Mary Elizabeth Aitcheson (Tipper Gore) was born...only 3 more Tipper Gore Birthdays until Clinton leaves office.
THE CLINTON COUNTDOWN
68
Weeks until Clinton leaves office
1995
October
Comments:
10/9/95: Columbus Day (observed)...only 1 more Columbus Day until Clinton leaves office.
10/11/75: Bill Clinton married Hillary Rodham...only 1 more Clinton Anniversary until Clinton leaves office.
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was most definitely not intellectual, why should we accept the idea that she was anti-intellectual? Her ruling simply had the effect of turning Edith back—as Edith gratefully acknowledged—to the Elizabethans and other great authors of the past. Furthermore, the author of the ruling was herself a devotee of the forbidden fruit. "Stacks of novels," Wharton writes in her autobiography, *A Backward Glance*, were "annually devoured" by her mother, her aunts, and her grandmother.

A Backward Glance also makes excitingly clear how indebted Wharton felt to both her parents for imparting to her their "reverence for the English language as spoken according to the best usage." "I have never quite understood," she continues,

> how two people so little preoccupied with letters as my father and mother had such sensitive ears for pure English. The example they set me was never forgotten; I still wince under my mother's ironic smile when I said that some visitor had stayed "quite a while," and her dry: "Where did you pick *that* up?" . . . We [the family] spoke naturally, instinctively good English, but my parents always wanted it to be better, that is, easier, more flexible and idiomatic. . . . I cannot remember a time when we did not, *every one of us* [italics added], revel in the humorous and expressive side of American slang; what my parents abhorred was not the picturesque use of new terms, if they were vivid and expressive, but the habitual slovenliness of those who picked up on the slang of the year without having any idea that they were not speaking in the purest tradition.

"We *all* [italics added] had a lively sense of humor," Wharton affirms, "and now that my [two] brothers were at home again the house rang with laughter. We *all* [italics added] knew by heart *Alice in Wonderland*, *The Hunting of the Snark*, and whole pages of Lear's *Nonsense Book*, and our sensitiveness to the quality of the English we spoke doubled our enjoyment of the incredible verbal gymnastics of those immortal works." On a rising emotional note, Wharton concluded that "this feeling for good English was more than reverence and nearer: it was love." The vapid conversational style of most of the social insiders in *The Age of Innocence* serves to augment an indictment of an entire society. But in Wharton's evocation in *A Backward Glance* of the vivid talk and the laughter in which "every one of us" participated in her girlhood home, she created a far livelier impression of Old New York. As for Lewis's rhetorical attempt to make us believe that inside that home was a monster mother and her victimized daughter, *A Backward Glance* reduces it to a joke.

Marion Mainwaring's letter in the *Times Literary Supplement* of December 16-22, 1988, got down to business right away:

> Working from 1969 to 1972 . . . I provided the documentation for large sections of Lewis's book. He lavishly praised my research, but distorted or neglected much of the material I gave him. One result is that other writers have been propagating his errors.

Mainwaring devoted the rest of the letter to damning examples of the "nature, number, scale, and cascade-effect" of those errors, of which my favorite—ranking right up there with the Thoreau-woodchuck gaffe—concerns a woman named Mirecourt, who allegedly blackmailed a scapegrace American journalist, Morton Fullerton, with whom Edith Wharton had a love affair in France in the years before World War I.

In 1969, nothing was really known about the Fullerton-Wharton liaison or about Mirecourt. "At Lewis's request," Mainwaring related, "I undertook the detective work that was called for in Paris where I was living." But while she achieved spectacular results with her work on the liaison, the Mirecourt investigation kept running into dead ends. Mainwaring could not even ascertain her first name. In a letter to Lewis, she speculated that Mirecourt might have been a journalist, "a kind of French Henrietta Stackpole." Her allusion was to a reporter in Henry James's *Portrait of a Lady*, but Lewis's recognition of it didn't suffice to keep him from blurrily incorporating James's character into his narrative thoughts about his own book. Wherefore, in one of the appendices in *Edith Wharton*, one finds a solemn statement that the "hard research" of the biographer's Paris associate has "disclosed the fact that the woman who had been blackmailing Fullerton was probably a certain Henrietta Mirecourt"—and in the text of the book the full name appears without the "probably"! "[Lewis's] carelessness is extraordinary," Mainwaring exclaimed. But her *TLS* letter convinced me that "abnormal" better describes it.

Lewis's other researcher, Mary Pitlick, whose familiarity with Wharton's vast correspondence is unrivaled in Wharton scholarship, as is her knowledge of the contextual circumstances of the first four decades of the novelist's life, set off the second demolition bomb in the pages of the *Times Literary Supplement* two weeks after Mainwaring's exploded. A crucial event in Lewis's book, Pitlick announced, never took place.

Speaking in Eriksonian lingo, Lewis had asserted in a chapter called "Breakdown" that in the summer of 1894, at the age of 32, Wharton suffered a "severe identity crisis." During this "terrible and long-drawn out period" extending "for more than two years," her "malaise" was marked by "paralyzing melancholy, extreme exhaustion, constant fits of nausea and no capacity whatever to make choices or decisions." The precipitants of this "total collapse," in Lewis's view, were her marital unhappiness, her absorption into "a guilt-ridden corner of her being" of her society's as well as her mother's "distrust" of anyone who took writing seriously, and her loss of self-confidence in her apprentice stories.

As proof of the collapse, Lewis cited a letter from Wharton to her editor at Scribners, to whom she had earlier promised a volume of stories, in December 1895. "Since I last wrote you over a year ago," she said, "I have been very ill, and I am not yet allowed to do any real work." Ending on a note of what Lewis called "frail gallantry"—for he wanted us to believe that the better part of a year of suffering still lay ahead of her—she said she hoped to "get well and have the volume ready next year."

Pitlick pointed out that Lewis's face-value interpretation of this excuse-making letter from a delinquent author to a publisher is given the lie by other letters that Wharton wrote in this time of supposed paralyzing melancholy. During 1894-96, Pitlick continued, Wharton did have occasional illnesses: respiratory problems, influenza, and a bout of "peri-

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tonitis" that could have been a miscarriage. Even so, the letters she wrote to people not at Scribners "disclose an ebullient woman going back and forth to Europe, revelling in French and Italian architecture and decorative arts; and ransacking shops for *antiquités*." (Having myself read some of these superbly vivacious letters, I can testify that Pitlick's characterization of the woman they disclose is exactly correct.)

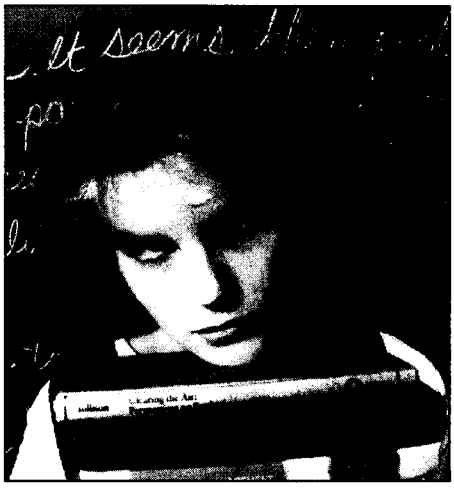
Despite the power and authority of Pitlick's critique, the Lewis-confected Wharton myth has not been laughed out of court. On every side, today's critics and scholars are working out of the following assumptions: Borne down by her society, her mother, and her husband, Wharton collapsed. Victimization, however, laid the groundwork for rebellion and rebirth. Gallantly, she fought back. She resumed writing. She had an affair with Fullerton. She shucked off her husband. And early and late she produced brave, wonderful books. In fine, *she triumphed.*

Naturally enough, one of the heaviest investments in the myth has been made by feminist critics, first and foremost among them the author of *A Feast of Words: The Triumph of Edith Wharton*, Cynthia Griffin Wolff. And naturally enough, her book is damp with gratitude to Lewis for a gift "that I share with the rest of the educated world—that is, the bounty of his biography of Edith Wharton."[3] That Lewis loves her back goes without saying. As he records on the last page of the seemingly endless acknowledgments in *Edith Wharton*:

> The latter sections of my book owe a great deal to intensive conversations with Cynthia Griffin Wolf. . . . Mrs. Wolff, as was mentioned earlier, is well launched on a psychologically oriented study of Edith Wharton's fiction, and I am bound to confess that my treatment of the later novels derives in good part from her perceptions. It was Cynthia Wolf who . . .

Presented with three chances to get Wolff's name right, Lewis misspelled it twice. Par for the course, one might say. ❐

[3] Politics is not the only bond between the feminist critics and Lewis. They also share his intellectual laziness. Taking the trouble to check his use of sources has been, and undoubtedly will continue to be, out of the question for them. Inasmuch as most of these ladies are pursuing teaching careers, considerations of advancement up the appointment ladder and of job shifts to classier institutions also have to be factored in to any comprehensive explanation of their reverent silence about the faults of his book. Why offend a Pulitzer Prize–winner with strategically located academic friends? The searing irony in all this is that the feminists have overlooked the possibility of a strain of misogyny in Lewis. Not only does he outrageously transform the novelist's mother into a monster, but his indignation about Wharton's suffering, whether in girlhood or womanhood, appears to me at least to mask a satisfaction in it.



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The MIA Sellout

by John Corry

The POW-MIA story is changing. Once it was about missing servicemen, but now it is about finance. A *New York Times* story about American business leaders meeting with a high Vietnamese official—"They gave him several standing ovations"—also notes that veterans groups picketed the hotel where the meeting was held. Meanwhile, a *Washington Post* editorial declares that "American businessmen have now joined the many citizens" who want to end the Vietnamese trade embargo. Only the fear of offending MIA families, the *Post* says, keeps the embargo in place. *Time* magazine, examining the charge that Ron Brown asked for $700,000 to help lift the embargo, ties in the "extremist fringes of the POW-MIA movement," as well as an "archconservative" veterans coalition, and a "far-right newsletter affiliated with Lyndon LaRouche." So determined are lunatic veterans to prevent a rapprochement with Vietnam, it seems, they will even spread lies about Ron Brown.

Well, perhaps, but that still may be irrelevant. The press is not comfortable with the MIA story, and reporters have always held it at arm's length. There are exceptions—Sydney Schanberg, a 1979 Pulitzer Prize–winner for his coverage of the fall of Cambodia, for example—but mostly the MIA story leaves the press cold. A generation of journalists who despised the Vietnam war has now risen to senior management, while their younger colleagues see the war as arid, dead history. Nonetheless, while reasonable people may disagree on whether the Vietnamese still hold live Americans, it has become increasingly hard to deny that Americans were left behind when the United States withdrew from Vietnam. Our great news organizations, though, show little interest in this. As Schanberg wrote in his column in *Newsday*: "By and large, the press—certainly the Washington press corps—continues to accept the ridiculous official line, purveyed in Hanoi as well as Washington, that there is no evidence of unreturned prisoners."

Yet the evidence is substantial, and indeed it continues to grow. Last April, Stephen J. Morris, a Harvard researcher, disclosed that he had found a Russian translation of a 1972 Vietnamese report in the archives of the old Soviet Central Committee in Moscow. It said that North Vietnam held 1,205 American prisoners in 1972, 700 more than it released the next year after the signing of the Paris peace accord. Morris's disclosure was page-one news, but it also aroused press skepticism. Despite his scholarly credentials, Morris was a well-known anti-Communist. Most stories about his find identified him that way. It seemed to be a warning.

A *New York Times* story was typical. It noted that Morris was "under criticism as a partisan who ardently opposes normalizing relations with Vietnam." Then it quoted H. Bruce Franklin, who denounced the Morris document as a "clumsy fabrication." The *Times* identified Franklin as "a professor of English and American studies at Rutgers University, who has written a book in which he asserts that the Vietnamese do not still hold American prisoners of war."

Franklin's identification, however, left out a great deal. While teaching at Stanford in 1971, Franklin helped found the Venceremos brigade. Later he wrote an admiring introduction to a collection of Stalin's writings. Franklin's paper trail has been considerable. In his 1975 autobiography, he proudly quoted a speech he once gave at a Vietnamese-American Independence Day celebration in Paris: "What I propose is that we declare the government of the United States of America in 1967 to be the enemy of mankind, the number-one criminal of the world, wanted dead or alive. . . . Our mutual enemy is not in Hanoi, he is in Washington."

As an unbiased source Franklin was suspect, although he also turned up on CNN and elsewhere to denounce the Morris document. The most sweeping, and apparently scholarly, denunciation of the document, however, appeared in the *New Yorker*. Neil Sheehan, who won a Pulitzer Prize as a UPI reporter in Vietnam, and later passed on Daniel Ellsberg's stolen copy of the Pentagon Papers to the *New York Times*, called the release of the Morris document "bizarre." Then, in a stunning display of illogic, he attacked Richard Nixon:

John Corry is a former New York Times *reporter and media critic and the author of* My Times: Adventures in the News Trade, *forthcoming in January from Putnam.*

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> The POW-MIA myth had its origin during the war, as a political gambit by Richard Nixon. To buy time and divert attention from the fact that instead of ending the war he was trying to win it through the strategy of Vietnamization . . . Nixon launched a campaign to focus public hatred on the Vietnamese for holding American prisoners. For a time, the gambit worked brilliantly. Some of the public seemed to be under the impression that the President was prosecuting the war solely to free the POWs, rather than adding to their numbers, lengthening their detention and getting 21,000 additional Americans killed by prolonging the conflict.

Sheehan's accusation was astonishing as well as nasty. It ignored any evidence that prisoners were left behind, other than, perhaps, "a few downed airmen in Laos." Sheehan was frozen in time, like so many other old Vietnamese reporters. They made their minds up long ago, and invested their intellectual capital in a particular point of view. They may believe in an Irangate conspiracy, say, or the so-called October Surprise, but they are unwilling to acknowledge Communist duplicity. They still find it easier to slander Nixon than to denounce Ho Chi Minh. It was wholly in character for the North Vietnamese to keep prisoners behind, and then lie about it. The only odd thing is how difficult it is for prominent journalists to admit it.

The Vietminh, the North Vietnamese's predecessors, held back thousands of prisoners after the fall of Dien Bien Phu and the French withdrawal from Indochina. Most of the prisoners were South Vietnamese, but at least some were French. Eventually, they were quietly ransomed back by the French government. Moreover, it has been known for some time that American POWs from the Korean War were secretly sent to the Soviet Union. Indeed, the Associated Press reported in September on a confidential government study that said: "The Soviets transferred several hundred U.S. Korean War POWs to the USSR and did not repatriate them. This transfer was mainly politically motivated, with the intent of holding them as political hostages, subjects for intelligence exploitation and skilled labor within the camp system."

According to the AP, most of the POWs were Air Force fliers. Coincidentally, a few weeks before the AP story appeared, the Pentagon released the translation of an account of a Vietnamese Communist party meeting held in either late 1970 or early 1971. It quoted a Communist official as saying that Vietnam held 735 "American aviator POWs," although it had admitted to holding only 368. American airmen, apparently, were prized in the Communist bloc for their technical knowledge.

This second document did not attract nearly as much press attention as the one Morris found, even though it corroborated the implications that the Vietnamese held back American prisoners. Moreover, on a recent documentary on the Discovery cable channel, Oleg Kalugin, a former KGB general, said it was "obvious that Americans were kept in Vietnam after the war was over." He declared this to be an "absolute fact—undeniable."

There is also the report of the Senate Select Committee on POW-MIA Affairs that was released early this year. It was covered at length by the press, but not always to good effect. Buried in its 1,223 pages are unnoticed bits and pieces. A single paragraph on page 426, for example, says that Jan Sejna, once a major general in the Czech army, "testified in a deposition and stated in interviews that American POWs were transported to the Soviet Union, transiting Prague." Sejna, who now works for the Defense Intelligence Agency, said he knew of as many as ninety POWs who were passed on this way from Southeast Asia to Moscow. It should be pointed out now that Sejna defected from Czechoslovakia in 1968, when the Vietnam war still had years to go. Any number of POWs might have passed through Prague later.

Meanwhile, Senator Robert J. Smith, the vice chairman of the Senate committee, says he is sure some of the POWs are still alive. Senator John McCain, a POW himself for five terrible years, says he thinks they are all dead. In a way, the matter is academic. No one in Washington or in Hanoi is being held accountable for the abandoned men. The Clinton administration appears to be moving toward lifting the embargo, and the press, for the most part, agrees with Sheehan, who ended his piece in the *New Yorker* by saying the United States must "break free of the last fantasy of the war"—that POWs were left behind in Southeast Asia.

Certainly the coverage has changed. You may read stories with Hanoi datelines now that never mention past unpleasantness. A recent page-one story in the *Times*, for example, said that in hustling, bustling Hanoi the only victims of the trade embargo were American businessmen. Another *Times* story asserted that growing prosperity even threatened Hanoi's colonial-era charm.

It seems likely that the Vietnamese are onto a good thing, and they know it. In peace as in war, when an opportunity arises they take it. One week after John Kerry, the chairman of the Senate committee on the POWs, visited Hanoi last December, Vietnam awarded Colliers International of Boston an exclusive world-wide contract to broker its commercial real estate deals. Colliers's CEO, Stuart Forbes, is Kerry's cousin. There is no evidence the senator was influenced by this in any way, although almost certainly the Vietnamese government thought he might be. It is another Vietnam story the press has missed. ❐

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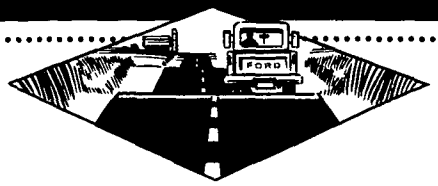

Sharia Feminists

by Daniel Wattenberg

Mim Udovitch, the feminist columnist at the *Village Voice*, told me a story about a young writer who approached her to pitch a story after the first news accounts that Lorena Bobbitt of Manassas, Virginia, who would later claim abuse, had lopped off her sleeping husband's penis. "She said she wanted to write about the case, and I said, 'Okay, that's good, that's very ambitious, that'll be difficult to do, what do you want to do?' And she said, 'Well, I'm really interested in how everybody is acting like he's the victim.' I said, 'You've got it wrong. He *is* the victim!'"

Early on, the incident provoked among some women a fair amount of sharply edged humor, the theme of which was invariably, "*Now* do you get it?" Fair enough. Unless you've agitated against the misogynistic shtick of Sam Kinison and Andrew Dice Clay or the current crop of tasteless Hillary Clinton jokes, you probably don't have standing to gripe about such Bobbitt jokes. But at some point, around the time we learned the names of the unhappy Manassas couple, the table-turning black humor became feminist dogma. And that's another story. Because, as Udovitch puts it, "It confuses something you might want to support metaphorically with something you would not support in actuality."

Feminist leaders have now rallied to Lorena Bobbitt as a martyr and an avenging angel for America's battered women. *Ms.* published an account of the incident in its September-October issue that does not mention that John Bobbitt denies his wife's charge that he raped her. The Virginia chapter of the National Organization for Women has set up a Lorena Bobbitt support line. If you wish to express support for her, you can call Virginia NOW Coordinator Denise Lee.

In a *Vanity Fair* account, Kim Masters tells of "the Lorena supporters who have transformed the V-for-Victory sign into a symbol of solidarity by making scissorlike motions with their fingers." (Shades of the Weather Underground's index-and-pinkie "fork salute" in solidarity with the Manson Family's stabbing to death—with a fork—of the pregnant Sharon Tate.) Masters also reports that Christine Sehn, wife of the surgeon who hooked John Bobbitt's penis back on, has been hounded by women angry that he did so. Sehn told Masters: "I've heard women say, 'I wish she'd put it down the garbage disposal.'"

Pronouncing the mutilation "a critical event in the history of women," Judith Olton Mueller, executive vice president of the Women's Center, a non-profit counseling center in Vienna, Virginia, told the AP, "Violence is done to women continuously and pervasively. And this is a retaliatory act of great dramatic value, where a woman has returned, retaliated in a way that is equally as violent and dramatic as the violence done unto her."

While Olton Mueller reportedly did not condone the act, her thinking illustrates one widely noted feature of the thinking of those who have condoned it: a presumption of John Bobbitt's guilt. It is assumed that he routinely beat his wife over a period of years. It is assumed that he raped her the night she castrated him. It is assumed, at the very least, that he was an irredeemable philandering pig.

Maybe the assumptions are right, maybe not. But the two trials in the Bobbitt case will not be a reprise of Clarence Thomas vs. Anita Hill. Here, the he-said-she-said accounts will be sifted and probed in real adversarial criminal proceedings. Witnesses will be deposed and cross-examined under oath by professional litigators, not by inept politicians fearful of "backlash" or by axe-grinding Senate staffers. Tendentious media accounts will be exposed and mooted in the course of the Bobbitt trials. There may be surprises.

In an ABC "20/20" segment on the case, correspondent Tom Jarriel quoted a resident of the Bobbitts' apartment complex to buttress his portrayal of John Bobbitt as a sexually vain and predatory action hero manqué:

> JARRIEL [voice-over]: John spent a lot of time keeping physically fit in the bodybuilding room next to the pool where he was also frequently seen. He signed in with a pseudonym—Jean-Claude Van Damme, an action film star. An airline employee and resident of Maplewood, Mike Dibley, complained about John flirting with his girlfriend right in front of him.
> MIKE DIBLEY, Maplewood resident: I said to my girlfriend, "That's one person I didn't want in this home, I don't want to be around," just from the three months that I'd known him, his actions—too strange. It was kind of the icing on the cake when someone's hitting on your girlfriend in front of you.

But Gregory Murphy, John Bobbitt's lawyer, recently deposed Mike Dibley. "[Dibley] said they took it totally out of context," says Murphy. Murphy paraphrases what Dibley told him under oath: "First off, I *did* say he was hitting on her, but I prefaced it. They asked me a question about 'Well, what's John like—is he out here flirting around and stuff?' And I said, 'Hey, John's a very nice guy, we've been friends, we get along great. . . . Yeah, there was a time, it was a very minor incident, but [John] was sitting around the pool talking to me and my girlfriend. And I walked to the bathroom or clubhouse, came back out, and I could see him sort of flexing his muscles. And what went through my mind

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was, 'He's trying to hit on my girlfriend.' But that was just a thought that ran through my mind. I never said anything to him, and my girlfriend never thought he was hitting on her at all."

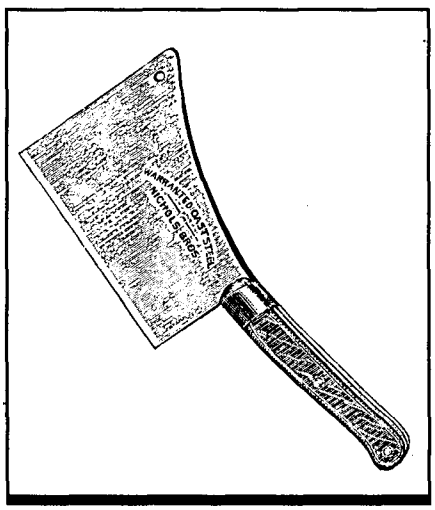
"All ["20/20"] took was 'hitting on my girlfriend,'" says Murphy. "And then," he continues, "they spliced that together with this 'I'd never let him in my apartment or around my girlfriend or anybody.'" But *that* Dibley quote, says Murphy, "was in response to a question, 'How do you feel about him now that he's been charged as a rapist, if they find he's a rapist?' and in response to *that*, he said, 'I wouldn't want him in my apartment or around my girlfriend.' And they put the two together."

Dibley also told "20/20" that he heard "strange . . . piercing screams every four seconds" from a woman next door on the fateful night. Jarriel presented this as evidence supporting Lorena's rape allegation. Murphy took sworn testimony from Dibley on this point, too. "I asked him to describe it. He said, 'Yeah, I did say that.' And the irony there is that [Lorena] told the police twice she never screamed. She said under oath she never screamed. None of the neighbors who were closest to it ever heard the screams. This guy's apartment is on the other side of the building. When I asked him to describe what he heard, he said he heard penetrating screams from a woman and heavy breathing from a man, who was breathing like he was thrusting himself inside a woman. I said, 'Where was it coming from?' And he pointed in a direction ninety degrees away from where the Bobbitts' apartment was."

Dibley further testified that "his girlfriend woke up because he was thrashing around . . . and she said, 'Go back to sleep, it's just people making love,'" according to Murphy. "And despite his putative conversation with his girlfriend, he says that she no longer remembers anything about waking up that night. Also, despite the fact that he said that he heard penetrating screams at 4-second intervals for 45 minutes, he concedes he never called the police. And as a matter of fact, when detectives investigating the case asked if he had ever heard anything from the Bobbitts' apartment, he said that he never had at any time. He ended it by saying that now he can't even be sure that what he heard was coming from the Bobbitts' apartment."

Furthermore, Murphy says, "'20/20' didn't even call me to ask about it, [even though] I think they knew Lorena had said there were no screams."

So, where did the screams and heavy breathing come from, if not from the Bobbitts? "I went to find the couple, and their bedroom, which I think he inadvertently thought was the Bobbitt's room or something, is like right next to his bedroom," says Murphy. "And they're off on their honeymoon right now." (Jarriel did not return phone calls, but "20/20" spokesperson Lucy Kraus said, "We were not aware that this guy gave a deposition following our broadcast. The only thing we knew was, Mike Dibley's apartment had a contiguous wall with the Bobbitts'." She added, "We stand by our story." Murphy counters that the contiguous wall is not a bedroom wall, and reasserts that neighbors



closer to the Bobbitts' bedroom heard no screams. I have not seen Dibley's deposition, and so can't corroborate Murphy's account of it. I include it only to convey that caution is in order for those who would simply assume Bobbitt's guilt.)

The feminists supporting Lorena add a second, more extreme assumption on top of the one that John is guilty: that her violent revenge was justified because women who have been battered or raped by their husbands cannot rely on male-dominated courts for justice. This, apparently, is NOW president Patricia Ireland's view. On "20/20," she said: "And the depth of anger that was plumbed by this and the response of support that comes for Lorena Bobbitt comes from that depth of anger, of feeling there hasn't been adequate resources and recourse and redress of the terrible violence that women face."

Correspondent Jarriel introduced Ireland's statement, weirdly, as an opinion on "the deeper meaning of a penis-cutting." But it looks more like an argument for vigilantism. In a colloquy between Jarriel, Hugh Downs, and Barbara Walters that followed Jarriel's piece, the info-tainers took sides, without reference to the crucial question of whether individualized, extrajudicial retribution is ever warranted, regardless of the provocation.

"Lord," Downs began. Then, he seemed to argue that if Lorena had only *killed* John to preempt further abuse, that might have been acceptable. Rather a big concession. But still too male-centric for the "different-voice" feminism of Barbara Walters, who held out, it seems, for a little bit of torture:

> DOWNS: You know, if in her mind the next abuse would have killed her, and she had killed him instead of doing what she did, you could think in terms of a self-defensive move. This was not self—it doesn't seem to—I mean, it couldn't have been self-defense. She just made an embittered enemy.
> JARRIEL: She said she'd never thought of killing him.
> DOWNS: Never did?
> JARRIEL: She never thought of killing him. This was something that came upon her in a moment, in a moment of passion.
> DOWNS: It was vengeance of a high-voltage nature.
> WALTERS: You know, it is interesting—and you pointed this out in the earlier part of your piece—the different reaction—
> JARRIEL: Yes.
> WALTERS: —between men and women. You use the word "vengeance," Hugh, and you, you know—
> JARRIEL: And you, Barbara?
> WALTERS: I would not. I mean, I do think that men and women see this very differently. And men see it as a man being mutilated, I think, in a most awful way a man can imagine. Many women see it as a woman abused to such a degree that she struck out at the area that was doing her the most harm.
> JARRIEL: I think it points out—
> WALTERS: And I think this is why the piece goes beyond the sensational story.
> JARRIEL: Right. I think it points out a huge gulf between men and women and communicating about sex that we almost hate to admit.
> DOWNS: You can still be very sensitive

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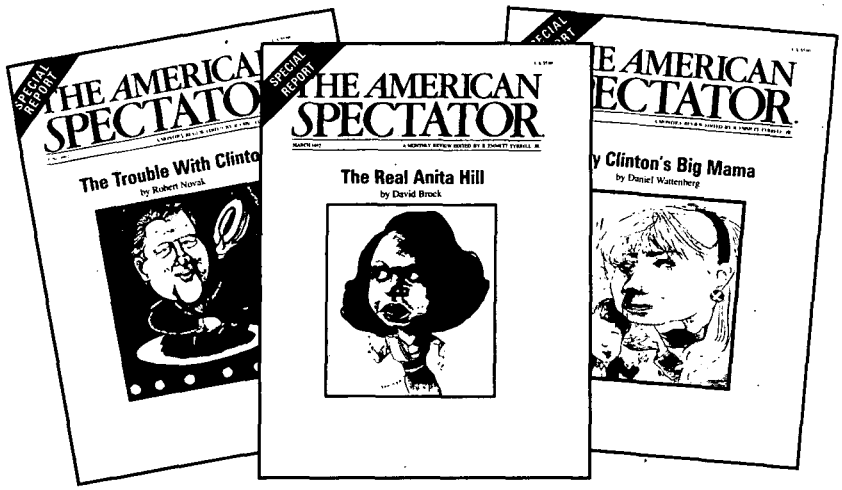

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to the need to cut down on abuse of women and see this act as different from the act of many women who are abused who may kill their husband.
WALTERS: If you're a man, you may, and you are.
DOWNS: I guess I can't help looking at it that way. Fascinating. Thank you.

Lord.

"There are a lot of women who have gone through this and probably wish they'd had a chance to get their own revenge," Kim Gandy, executive vice president of NOW, told the AP. "So I certainly think that explains the number of women who have said, 'Yeah, well, he got what he deserved.'" Gandy may well be merely characterizing, rather than commending, what she perceives to be a prevalent attitude among women. But if so, is it in the interest of women to be thus characterized?

Under Islamic *sharia* law, a thief's hand is cut off. Are we witnessing sharia feminism? Or simply sadism? The only world in which such acts can conceivably have a place is one in which acts of sadism against women are commonplace—and this, I take it, is how Robin Morgan, feminist author and contributing editor to *Ms.* sees *our* world. "Were one-tenth the attention given to this given to rape, battery, and *all the women chopped up into pieces all the time*, we'd be in good shape," she told *New York Newsday*.

Barbara Walters may ape Patricia Ireland's tacit approval of vigilantism and sadism, but the unreflecting anchorwoman hardly personifies contemporary feminism. Some are not eager to associate themselves with the politicization of a private tragedy (a reluctance shared, incidentally, by Lorena Bobbitt herself). "Although I feel for her in human terms, I don't consider what she did to be a political action," says the *Village Voice*'s Udovitch. "What she did was a crime. It's like when you see Mike Tyson T-shirts, or William Kennedy Smith groupies, which you saw both of. It's like when the rapist is considered really the ideal man, the heroic man, not because he's innocent, but because he's guilty. This is the same thing. That feminism would want to have anything to do with this as a good-for-women story doesn't make sense to me. It just shows how, when you have idiots espousing your philosophy, you are never well off." ❐

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Daughtrey, Shanahan, Barkett & Gertner

by Terry Eastland

In September, the *New York Times* reported that President Clinton might nominate some lower court judges who disagree with *Roe* v. *Wade* and its radical teaching that the Constitution protects a woman's right to choose abortion. Political liberals immediately expressed their opposition to any judicial selection process that might deviate from their pro-abortion rights orthodoxy. As explained by White House spokespersons, the reason Clinton might pick an anti-*Roe* or even *Roe*-indifferent nominee involves the peculiar politics of judicial selection: Especially with district judgeships, the custom is for same-party senators or, if there are none of those, state and local party leaders to direct the president's choice. It is therefore possible that an anti-*Roe* Democrat in either the Senate or a state could, in effect, pick a lower-court judge not to the liking of, well, the National Organization for Women. While the political coordinates are such that this could occur in the case of Wyoming, where, both senators being Republican, a pro-life Democratic governor is promoting the candidacy of an anti-*Roe* Democratic lawyer, don't expect it to happen often, or even occasionally. Indeed, the more important story line—yet to receive A-1 notice in the *Times* or anywhere else—is the extent to which, thanks to Clinton, firebrands of the legal left are now making their way to the lower federal bench.

Consider Martha Craig Daughtrey, a justice on the Tennessee Supreme Court (and Friend of Gore) whom Clinton has nominated for the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. Daughtrey passes the activist pro-*Roe* litmus test (endorsed by Clinton for his Supreme Court choices), and then some. Daughtrey wrote for her court last year in the Brave New World case of *Davis* v. *Davis*, in which a divorcing couple litigated who had rights to their jointly produced "frozen embryos," on storage in a fertility clinic. The Tennessee constitution protects freedom of worship, prohibits unreasonable searches and seizures, and guarantees freedom of speech. Doing to these provisions approximately what Justice Harry Blackmun did to similar parts of the federal Constitution in *Roe*, Daughtrey found lurking therein a generalized right of privacy that includes—her words—a "right of procreational autonomy." Inasmuch as, for Daughtrey, this right encompasses the right "to avoid genetic parenthood," the party wanting to exercise this freedom and thus destroy the frozen embryos—in this case it was the father—must prevail.

Daughtrey may have been auditioning for the seat of the aging Blackmun, whom court watchers expect to retire soon. If so, it was not the first time she has played the role of the modern activist judge—almost to the point of parody. Dissenting in part in a 1992 death penalty case, Daughtrey wrote:

> Implicit in death penalty jurisprudence is the recognition that the standards of decency are not static but evolving, that society is not stale but maturing, and that the level of community morality will continue to rise until the reasoned moral response of the people of Tennessee will be, if it is not already, that the death penalty is cruel and unusual punishment.

This is sentiment worthy of Thurgood Marshall, who dissented more than 1,400 times in death penalty cases, on grounds that capital punishment is always in violation of the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

Clinton's early nominees also include Thomas Shanahan, a judge on the Nebraska Supreme Court now headed for a district court seat. Having recognized a variety of new causes of action, Shanahan is apparently a payback (one of many to come) to the nation's trial lawyers, among the biggest of Clinton's campaign contributors. Shanahan also has been a reliable vote, often in dissent, for positions advocated by criminal defendants that stretch beyond reasonable interpretations of relevant law. In a 1986 case, for example, his court rejected the argument that evidence obtained through a warrantless search of "open fields" (and used to convict the defendant of growing marijuana) should not have been admitted. Shanahan dissented, arguing that the Nebraska constitution's search-and-seizure provision should be read to prohibit what the Fourth Amendment to the federal Constitution—as currently interpreted by the Supreme Court in its "open fields" doctrine—allows. "When called upon to construe the Nebraska constitution," he wrote, "this court should not exhibit some Pavlovian conditioned reflex in an uncritical adoption of federal decisions." As a district judge, will Shanahan construe the Fourth Amendment more broadly than the, well, Pavlovian judges on the lower federal bench? And how will he speak of the justices above, whose rulings as a district judge he is obligated to enforce?

Perhaps the most interesting, and likely the most controversial, of Clinton's early judicial choices is Rosemary Barkett, a former nun turned trial lawyer (another payback) and Friend of Reno (as in Janet), now a justice on the Florida Supreme Court. Where to start in relating what evidently brought her to the attention of Clinton and his judge pickers?

Terry Eastland, editor of Forbes MediaCritic, *is editor of* Religious Liberty in the Supreme Court: The Cases That Shape the Debate Over Church and State, *published this fall by the Ethics and Public Policy Center, where he is a fellow.*

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How about the amazing remark she made in a 1992 case in which her court chose from six different modifications to a state legislative redistricting plan? Barkett said she was "loath to agree to any of the convoluted plans submitted under the hurried circumstances." "If I had to choose only among those presented," she added, "I would choose the plan submitted by the NAACP simply because this is the organization that had traditionally represented and promoted the position that advances all minority interests." This is called judging on the basis of the party, not the merits—a no-no on any proper reckoning of what it means to be a judge.

As for judicial doctrine, Barkett rides the standard activist horses. Consider the Tampa street-corner case of *Wyche* v. *State*. A woman wearing little attire waved to passersby before entering a car that stopped to collect her; she was convicted under a city ordinance of loitering for the purpose of prostitution. On appeal to the Florida Supreme Court, the ordinance was struck down as unconstitutional. Barkett's plurality opinion said the law, because it could potentially punish such innocent conduct as "hailing a cab or a friend," was "overbroad," and thus in violation of the First Amendment. Putting to one side how any ordinance aimed at regulating disorderly conduct could survive under Barkett's reasoning (courts typically require a statute to be of "substantial overbreadth" before voiding it), the most striking feature of her opinion is a statement that the ordinance "violates substantive due process because . . . it may be used to punish entirely innocent activities." The sins judges have committed in the name of substantive due process are legion. If Barkett is willing to invoke substantive due process in a case like this, it would seem she might use it anywhere to reach any decision she believes is right—which, of course, is the point of having this hoary doctrine around.

Then there is Barkett's dissent in a 1993 case in which the majority upheld statutory monetary *caps* on non-economic damages in medical malpractice cases. Her reason: The caps violated the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. How Barkett reached this conclusion is too convoluted to describe here. Suffice to say, she used a standard for review that, if widely employed, would lead judges to invalidate just about any statute they might personally disagree with. Because this was a case of interest to the state's trial lawyers, it bears noting that those attorneys have created an award in Barkett's name, given annually to, presumably, lawyers like her.

Barkett cannot be accused of being insensitive to criminal defendants. Consider this 1989 case: A man breaks up with his girlfriend and two months later breaks into her home at night, bearing a knife. The former girlfriend, fearing a night like this, is gone, but her roommate, alas, is not. She screams, the defendant stabs her to death, for which act he is convicted and sentenced to death. Barkett's court affirms the sentence. She alone dissents. Why? Because the defendant was "surprised" by the presence of the soon to-be victim—the trial court found the murderer had not expected anyone to be home—the death penalty was a disproportionate sentence.

My favorite Barkett opinion is her solitary dissent in *LeCroy* v. *State* (1988), in which the majority affirmed a death sentence for two brutal first-degree murders. The defendant was 17 years and ten months old when he committed the crimes. The sentencing judge noted LeCroy's youth but found him mentally and emotionally mature, and thus proceeded, as Florida law provides in cases in which a child of any age is charged with a capital crime, to try and handle the defendant "as if he were an adult." Barkett, however, said that to impose the death sentence on a "child"—even one two months shy of 18, even one the trial court had deemed mentally and emotionally mature—was barred by both federal and state constitutions.

More nominees from the firm of Daughtrey, Shanahan & Barkett are sure to come. In line for a district judgeship in Massachusetts is Nancy Gertner, a Yale Law School classmate of Hillary Rodham Clinton's who has been recommended to Clinton by Sen. Ted Kennedy. A civil rights and criminal defense attorney, Gertner is said to often describe herself this way: "I'm not a liberal, I'm a lapsed radical." (One of her first cases saw her defending Susan Saxe, the anti-war activist who was involved with her roommate, the recently captured Katherine Anne Power, in the shooting death of a Boston policeman in 1970.)

Gertner speaks the language of a "lapsed" radical. "The fact that this claim [Anita Hill's] scuttled the nomination [Clarence Thomas's] or delayed the nomination helps the cause," she told *Newsweek* in the fall of 1991, "like nothing else." Gertner would seem to have done well by the cause; she told the *Boston Globe* last year that the number of calls she received about sexual harassment doubled after the Hill-Thomas hearing and the value of settlements she negotiated tripled. Gertner seems to have embraced the view that most consensual sex is rape; remarks she made last year at Harvard suggest she believes that sexual partners must explicitly consent to the act before engaging in it, or else the police should appear. Gertner has yet to explain what she thinks remains of the modern right of privacy, which presumably would foreclose such regulation but which she embraces in the abortion context.

And speaking of abortion, Gertner appears to believe that the abortion right should not be limited—not even in the final weeks of a pregnancy. She has opposed every attempt by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to regulate abortion. Interestingly, one of Gertner's clients was a woman indicted for vehicular homicide in the drunken-driving death of her eight-and-a-half-month-old unborn. When these charges were dropped, Gertner, not one to pass up an opportunity for ideological comment, called it "a victory for reproductive rights." Gertner also has analogized the abortion right to the right to vote, as though both should be exercised often. Question for Gertner and other Clinton nominees: Do you believe in your president's remark that abortion should be safe and legal but rare?

When Gertner's name surfaced last summer as a likely judicial nominee, she told the *Globe* that what some see in her as an advocate may not be present when she dons the robes of a judge. If so, she might disappoint her White House sponsor(s). The odds are, however, that she won't, no more than any of the other leftward judges Clinton is promoting. A few of these nominees—Barkett could be the first—might not make it to the bench, especially if they are seen for what they are. Still, most of them will be confirmed, because Democrats control the Senate. That is why the ballot box remains the most effective recourse for those who oppose the arrival of Clinton's America in the seats of judicial power. ❐

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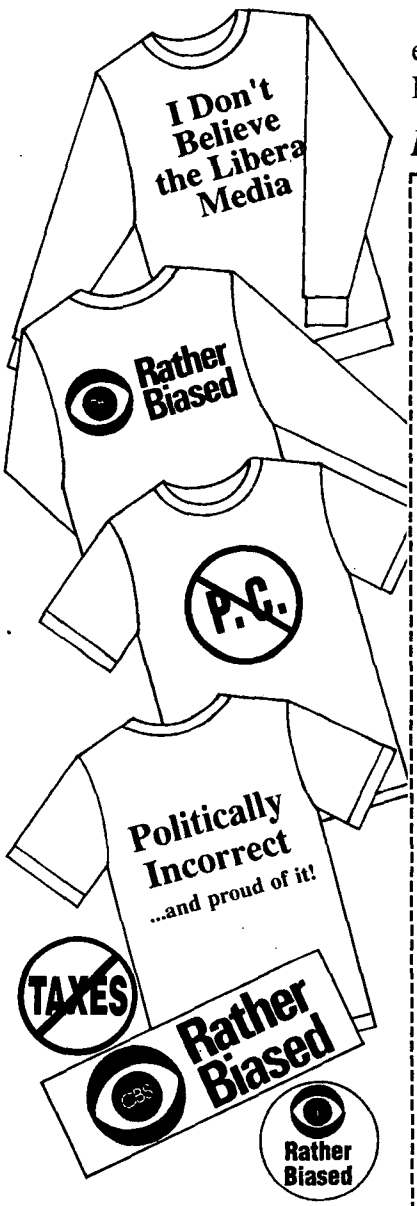

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Dreamball

by Benjamin J. Stein

Monday

A listless, quiet day. No calls to do commercials, no calls to be in movies, just lying on my couch and reading about two intensely active, bad-acting miscreants of the world of financial fraud. I had a stack of SEC filings, clippings, and trial pleadings next to me. Little by little, I plowed through them, feeling lonely and sorry for myself. Why aren't I president? Why aren't I making an offer to buy Paramount? Why aren't I host of a talk show?

K., a young woman who wants to be a star, came over to help me unpack a huge stack of boxes of books, and then we went to lunch at Hugo's. K. is a model, and there were photos of her up on the wall. They were nice, and I had a truly fine lunch, but how I wish the phone would ring with an acting gig.

After lunch, I took a short nap, lying on my hard working couch, listening to Mozart's Waisenhausemesse, bathing in the greatness of the sound like a courtesan bathing in champagne, or maybe just like bathing in something better than water, something that bathes the soul.

Then, redemption. I drove over to see my son, little Mr. Delicious Perfect, who had just gotten home from school. "Daddy," he said, "will you throw this ball to me?" He produced from his toy box—a chest the size of a Lincoln Continental—a battered yellow tennis ball. Mommy's house doesn't have a backyard except for a swimming pool, so we went out into the street, which is little used. Except for the rock star across the way, hardly anyone comes down this road. It's great for throwing a ball.

It was a hot and smoggy day. We both stood outside in the soup and tossed the ball back and forth. Now, Daddy—that's me—is not much of an athlete. But I still managed—at 48—to throw him the ball, and he made as if to catch it. At first he'd drop it most of the time, but then, little by little, he started to catch it.

"Great," I said. "Great catch."

For the first ten minutes, Tommy made a big effort to throw the ball over my head, past me, along the pavement, anything to keep me from catching it. Finally, I said, "Any time you purposely throw it past me, I'm going to make you go chase it."

After a few chases by him, he pulled himself together. With a look of intense concentration, he rotated his arm around like an old-time pitcher, squinted in my direction, and then took a step forward and hurled—not threw—the ball at me like Walter Johnson in old newsreels. The ball literally zinged through the smog right at my face.

I caught it, said, "Great, fantastic throw," and tossed it back. He threw it at me again, a high, hard one that would have hurt like hell if I hadn't caught it inches in front of my nose.

Then, for about five minutes, he threw ball after ball at me, always zingers, always right in the strike zone or just above.

This little angel, I thought, is a six-year-old Nolan Ryan, the next Whitey Ford.

Then he threw one past me, and scampered off after it. He said he was thirsty, so we went inside so he could have a ginger ale. He drank it in loud, incessant gulps, and then said, "More ball throwing, Daddy. Was I great?"

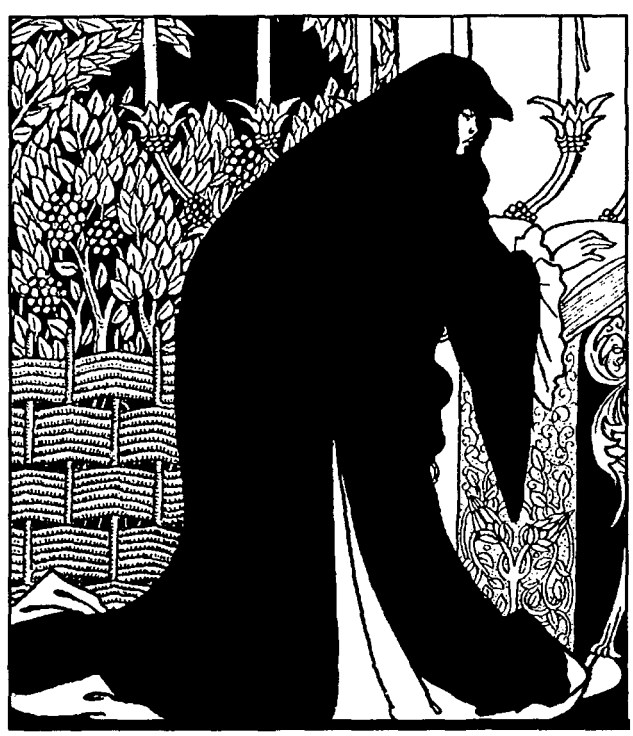
"You were great," I said. "Really, really great."

He threw the first few past me, more or less on purpose, but then I did something very out of character. I leapt up in the air and by a miracle of luck, caught one. I tossed it back to him, and from then on, every time I caught it, he threw it back high and hard and true. It was imitation or a pact or something deeper, but when I caught what he was throwing, showed the example of straight, decent play, he did the same.

Zing, zing, zing, one after another, the ball came racing toward me at frightening speed, and the thought came through my mind, "This kid is a star."

All sorts of other thoughts came through my head as well.

Damn the disintegration of public schools, I thought. Why



Benjamin J. Stein is a writer, lawyer, economist, and actor living in Malibu, California.

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can't he be in a public school with a playground and playing field instead of a private school that barely has a jungle gym in the parking lot? Because at the public schools in Mommy's neighborhood, first graders get shaken down for lunch money by other kids.

Why can't we live in a neighborhood where the houses have backyards big enough for tossing a ball around? Because the recession notwithstanding, houses like that are still a million five in halfway-safe neighborhoods.

Why can't I take him to a park and throw the ball with him on grass, under trees? Because the closest park is about a half hour from here, through traffic that would frighten Rommel.

And then another thought: Why let anything cast a pale pall over a moment that's still perfect? Forget the smog and the traffic and the collapse of the public schools. I'll think about that tomorrow.

For now, I'm with young Ryne Duren, and it's a great day for being a father.

"Am I doing great, Daddy?" he asked. "Can we keep doing this?"

"You're doing great," I said. "We can keep doing this until it gets dark," and we did.

Tuesday

Trixie is dying. She has terrible arthritis, fusing of joints, destruction of cartilage, myelopathy along crucial nerve routes to her lower body. She cannot stand up for more than a few seconds any longer. She collapses on her hind legs and cannot get up. She lies there, helpless, sometimes trying to pull herself with her front legs, more often than not just lying in a sad heap.

This has been coming on for some time. At least a year ago, she had some damage, and some inability to move. She stopped walking up and down the steps at my house in Malibu. One day she fell between two stones in my garden and couldn't get up. One leg was stuck between two cruel rocks. She didn't even whimper. On another morning, she saw a rabbit and started after it. She fell down a steep hill and I had to clamber down and pull her up through the brush and the rattlesnake lairs.

Sometimes when she falls, she fouls herself and cannot move out of her mess. To see that proud, perfect German short-haired face in her own dirt is enough to make anyone cry.

We've taken her to the vet many times. At first, he gave her hydrocortisone. That helped, but it also broke down her resistance to the disease, so that the help was temporary at best. Then he recommended that I take her to a "holistic" healer. That lowlife tried to sell me books about how to get rich by thinking about it and kept me waiting for an hour. I left. I didn't want anyone insensitive enough to keep a dog waiting for an hour to work on my dog. I also don't like hucksters in white smocks.

Just two days ago, I took her to a vet in West L.A. He recommended something called Adequin, which is supposed to be what race horses use when they have arthritis. It has not helped. She's still staggering around, mostly in a state of collapse, voiding in cascades without any warning.

The vet says she's not uncomfortable, but I don't believe him. People with arthritis have terrible pain, and why should Trixie be any different?

I keep thinking of how, two years ago, when we had terrible floods in Malibu, I was at my house, without a phone, without electricity, with water coming down the street in torrents, and I was in my bed with my Trixie in my arms, and I felt as safe as I have ever felt.

Trixie, who put my wife in the hospital because she once arrived home from a trip without me.

Trixie, who bit the plumber because that man came too close to me while fixing a drain.

Trixie, who used to lie in the back seat of the car for years waiting for me to come out of auditions.

Trixie, who had more dignity than I will ever have, more loyalty, and more sensitivity, who used to be able to leap off the ground to seven feet in the air, is now in a heap in the kitchen, and I have to wash her twice a day. But I remember when she was a young dog, and would put out her paw every time I came in the room. I remember when she was newly adopted and shook from head to paw at nervousness on meeting her new family.

Open my heart and there you will see, engraved upon it, My Little Trixie.

Monday

Ah, but then there is Hollywood. I'm on the set of "Full House," over on the Warner lot. I'm playing a snobby, horrible food critic who torments the regulars about their new nightclub. I only have a few lines, but you may be sure I live them and love them.

We're on stage 24, right next to a lot of other shows, and Warner is really the cutest of lots, and everybody is being very nice to me.

Bob Saget, the star of this and of "America's Funniest Home Videos," is particularly kind, but everyone is nice to me, the wayfaring day player.

Scott Weinger, a teenage heartthrob, showed me his Apple PowerBook. Dave Colieu, an astonishing voice talent, did his Vietnamese voice for me. Lori Loughlin told me about her investment banker hubby. John Stamos, an adult heartthrob, played drums.

A teenage extra asked if I would say "Bueller, Bueller."

A UCLA co-ed asked me if I could help her get into graduate school at Yale.

"What did you want to study?" I asked.

"Well," she said, "maybe map making. I've always been interested in maps and geography. I grew up in Indiana,

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—*Rex Vardeman*
Circulation Manager

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where it's really flat, and then moved here where it's really hilly, and so I'm interested in maps."

"Did you say India or Indiana?"

"Indiana," she said, "but I've always wanted to go to India."

"Do you know where India is ?"

"Ben," she said with a scowl, "I'm a senior at UCLA. I hope I know where India is."

"Where is it ?"

"Somewhere in South America?" she said with a smile on her face. On my look, she said, "Well, where then?"

I continued to stare, so she said, "Don't tell me it's in Indiana."

Tuesday

A visit with poor Miss Trixie on the way to Stage 24, and then the long walk to the stage from parking. As I passed the guard gate, a guard asked me where I was going. "To 'Full House,'" I said. "I'm a lowly actor."

"There're a lot of people lower than you," the guard said.

I spent most of the day rehearsing, with occasional long stretches of sleeping in my dressing room. The plot is about three elderly women who show up at the club when everyone is expecting a major rock act called REM. My dressing room is next to the room of the elderly women guitarists and singers, who are called The Del Rios.

Now, I would swear that the Del Rios have Yiddish accents. If not Yiddish, then Polish. Big thick accents. But they claim to be Mexicans. As I was seated in the hair room getting my huge wig attached to my head, one of the Del Rio sisters sat next to me.

"Pardon me," I said, "but where is your accent from?"

"Accent? Vot accent?" she demanded.

"I think you have a fairly distinct accent. Is it Polish? Czech?"

"But vee haff no accent," she said.

"All right," I said. "Have it your way."

"Possibly is Southern accent," she said, "because vee from Vashinkton."

"Possibly," I agreed.

Thursday

This is the day we shoot "Full House" before a live studio audience. I'm in my dressing room doing a slow boil though as I read in the *Wall Street Journal* about the Clinton health plan, or as I like to call it, The Clinton Bolshevization Plan.

I don't get it. Why do they have to screw around with health care for middle-class people? Why not just assure health coverage for the poor or those unable to get health coverage at their jobs, and then leave everyone else alone? Why do they have to get me to join a Bolshevik experiment where my doctor—if I can still see him—is going to be watched and harassed by a "gatekeeper"? If my insurer and I can pay for it, why torture us by making us peons of a bureaucrat in a gray building? Let's face it: this is raw dictatorship, slipping under the tent by controlling us through the most vulnerable, scary part of our lives: our health and that of our families.

I don't like it. It's hard for me to concentrate on my role. I have to artfully put my nose into a cappucino cup and get whipped cream on it. I can't do that when I'm thinking about how Hillary is trying to control me and hurt me to work out some crazed agenda of her own. (Wasn't her father in the health field?)

The audience cheered wildly for Bob Saget and John Stamos, shouted "Bueller, Bueller" when I appeared, and in no time at all, the show was over. My friend Barron, who had come from Phoenix to watch, wandered around the lot with me. Over on stage 20, or nearby, there was a party for the launch of a new Steven Spielberg cartoon called "Animaniacs," on which I once played a small part. I wandered about the party with Barron, eating strawberries. Then I showed him the Spanish-style main administration building, and some sets of a city street, and then we left.

I'm telling you, if Americans generally knew what a great life even a very small player has, L.A. would collapse under the weight of the accountants, lawyers, foundation directors, and economists who would come here.

Tuesday

A meeting with my pal A., at an extremely successful TV production company in Beverly Hills. I was there because I have written a spec script for a sitcom. A spec script means no one has paid me for it. I did it just to try to sell it, and particularly to try to sell it because it stars little me.

In it, I play a middle-aged detective who is a single father to a rambunctious, extremely clever little six-year-old angel boy.

It only took me three days to write it. When I was finished, I sent it over to A. so that he could tell me what was right and wrong with it.

He sat at his desk while I sat on a tiny couch and took notes. It was a fascinating experience.

"There are rules," A. said. "Your main character has to be likeable. You've given yours a blond girlfriend with a mink coat. That means she has money, and that makes her unlikeable."

I wrote it down.

"Also, you have a white character who makes racist jokes about a black character. The networks won't like that."

"But the black character is always making racist jokes about white people," I protested.

"You can try it," A. answered with a shrug, "but I'm telling you, the network won't like it, and my company won't like it."

"All right," I said.

"Plus, the little boy has to be more sweet. This one is always pestering his father for a twenty-speed bike and trying to catch him in a trap and that doesn't make him sweet."

"I think it makes him sweet," I said.

"No, Benjy," A. said. "That makes him obnoxious. The audience has to like him, has to have a rooting interest in him. It doesn't matter what you think of the little boy, the audience won't like him if he's that much of a pest."

Then A. gave a little talk about how the plot has to begin by page six, how the meter of a joke must be two short lines and then one long line, and how the subplot must be clearly resolved when the A plot is resolved.

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This is really interesting, but somewhat out of my league. I guess I'm a journalist more than a sitcom writer. Still, I'll try again. I want this to get on the air.

Sunday

Dinner and a screening at the simply incredible home of L., a major TV producer, one of the most successful TV producers in history. The host is a genial, genuinely wonderful man with twinkling blue eyes. His wife is a younger, kind, lovely woman who lights up the room when she comes in. Their house is on a hilltop on the Westside, overlooking the Westside and the Santa Monica Bay.

We had a buffet light dinner while we watched the sun set over the bay. A well-known left-wing columnist from the *L.A. Times* and I had quite a cordial talk about Nixon, whom he swears he secretly admires. Then I had a long talk with a legendary movie star about which airlines have the best service. Then I talked to the teenage daughter of another Hollywood mogul about Georgetown, and then we had a screening of *The Age of Innocence*.

The movie makes mowing the lawn seem exciting, and Daniel Day-Lewis must be the worst actor in Hollywood, but the set-up at L.'s projection room was beyond belief. Perfect sound out of his Frazier and JBL speakers and Dolby amplifying system. Perfect projection. And a perfectly comfortable seat surrounded by happy people.

On the screen, simulacra of rich, inside people from Edith Wharton's New York. In the screening room, reality of rich, inside people one hundred and twenty years later.

On screen, they have their rituals of eating oysters and roast beef and turkey and many different kinds of wine. In Bel-Air, we have our rituals of not eating red meat, not drinking alcohol.

On screen, they have their codes of no divorce and not indulging their emotions. In the screening room, we have our rituals of animal rights and protecting the environment. Both groups are doing what they think is morally and ethically right. Both groups have codes to protect themselves, and who are we to scoff at what they thought was protecting them?

The Latin word for law is "lex," which also means "protection." A lot of Americans have forgotten that.

Monday

A furtive call from my pal Staci. "Do you want to hear something amazing?" she asked. "I'm interviewing for a job at"—here she named a major talent agency—"and when the agent saw that I had worked for you, he got excited and said he loved your articles in *The American Spectator*, and he read the *Spectator* cover to cover. Maybe you could call him and give him a pep talk for me."

"Of course," I said.

I called the young man and told him who I was. "Listen," he said, "I love the *Spectator*, but I only get it at home. If people here knew I was a closet conservative, I'd be in hot water."

"I'll send you one of my books in a plain brown wrapper," I said. "Keep you out of trouble."

And meanwhile, I pray for Trixie, who will soon be immortal. ❐

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The Great Patriotic War

by Grover G. Norquist

On Monday, October 4, House minority leader Bob Michel (R-Ill.) announced that he would not run for another congressional term. Jerry Solomon of New York, believed to be Michel's favored successor as Republican leader, immediately announced his candidacy. But by Thursday, Republican whip Newt Gingrich stood outside the Capitol with seventy-five Republican colleagues to announce that he had firm commitments of support from 109 of 176 House Republicans. Official Washington was stunned by the speed and size of Gingrich's victory. Gingrich had garnered eighty-eight of those commitments—the required majority—within thirty hours of Michel's announcement, and won support from fully forty of forty-eight freshmen. Although it went unreported by the Gingrich-demonizing press, Gingrich won the support of moderates and conservatives alike. They were voting not simply for a conservative but for an aggressive political fighter who has campaigned hard for Republicans of all stripes. The combative Gingrich is now the unchallenged leader of his party in the House.

The accommodationist politics of the Michel years is thus nearing an end, and the Republican leadership is set on a conservative and confrontational path for the foreseeable future. Dick Armey has announced that he will run for re-election as conference chairman and is presently unopposed. Tom DeLay of Texas, Bill McCollum of Florida, and Bob Walker of Pennsylvania, all conservatives, are vying to replace Gingrich as whip. Ohio Republican John Boehner, the aggressive young chairman of the Conservative Opportunity Society, is expected to enter one of the leadership races as well.

While the timing of Michel's announcement was driven by Illinois' filing deadlines, it came at an important juncture—on the eve of what is to be the decisive congressional battle over what kind of government and society Americans are going to have. For just twelve days earlier, Bill Clinton had announced his plan to have the government take over the health-care industry. Clinton, elected with a vote midway between Mike Dukakis's losing 46 percent and Jimmy Carter's losing 41 percent, will lose the presidency in 1996, barring a three-way race or a fundamental change in the political landscape. And effecting that change is the goal of this "health-care reform" package.

Some Republicans, traumatized by the loss of the White House, fail to see the fundamental shakiness of the present Democratic coalition. Labor unions continue their decline. Hispanic voters are not cooperating with the plans of Democrats who hoped another "minority" would accept dependency status and join blacks as a non-demanding voting bloc for Democrat candidates. Homosexuals are hardly as numerous as the Clintonites had led themselves to believe—when polls last year showed Clinton winning 85 percent of the gay vote, Democratic campaign workers predicted the emergence of a gay bloc that would provide 8.5 percent of the vote in any election, a bloc equal in size to the black vote. But this was based on a naive belief in the Kinsey claim that homosexuals comprise 10 percent of the population—when the actual number may be closer to 1 percent. Meanwhile, the New Deal Democrats who came of age in the 1930s are now aged 72 to 82 and passing away.

Clinton can also see the campaign for choice in education as the beginning of the privatization of 6 percent of the nation's economy. Choice will undermine the monopoly of 3 million unionized school teachers who, through the National Education Association, provide millions in political cash and plenty of well-distributed muscle into every congressional district. And despite conservative frustration at the failure of initiatives in Colorado and Oregon, liberals know that the fight for school choice is like a nuclear attack . . . you only have to get one through the defenses. A large enough pilot program will show the strength, popularity, and success of choice and undermine the scare tactics of the left. Of course, the Democrats' most dwindling asset is the belief—now discredited even in the Soviet Union and Mexico—that government can effectively run large parts of the economy.

With a shrinking political infrastructure and a discredited ideology, the Clintons have decided to attack. They will nationalize 14 percent of the economy and politicize health care. Then 14 million workers' livelihoods will be dependent on government decisions. Companies and individuals that were once independent will have to come to grips with Democratic power. Opposition to government spending and taxes, once derided simply as "greed," will now be the cause of sickness and death. (Senator Ted Kennedy has already voiced such a claim.) Washington, which today claims control of 25 percent of the nation's economy, will soon control 100 percent of your health.

For several weeks the establishment press fawned on the First Lady and Republicans in the Senate appeared to be falling all over themselves to apologize for their beastly opposition to Clinton's budget and "stimulus package." But the pleasantries exchanged with Hillary Clinton—in meaningless hearings over a vague 237-page outline of intent—only masked a growing understanding by the Republicans of the stakes of Clinton's challenge.

Gingrich says that the "health care debate is the decisive battle about whether we become a free society or become a socialist state." The Clinton plan, he says, "will transfer so much money and power to the government that it would change

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the nation." Senator Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) points out that the Clinton plan relies on price controls, government bureaucracies, and the elimination of consumer choice. "Clinton's plan is based on the premise that a government monopoly can do things more effectively and more economically than the market and competition."

For Gramm, it is not enough to oppose and defeat the Clinton plan. Republicans should present a reform that restrains prices by moving the government out of the health-care field, not further into it. Gramm's Comprehensive Family Health Access and Savings Act would provide a "medical savings account" option to allow employers and employees to buy a $3,000-deductible catastrophic insurance policy. Individuals would then spend the first $3,000 of health-care costs for themselves and their families and be covered by a catastrophic insurance plan for higher costs. A provision allowing individuals to keep (in an IRA) any money not spent gives a real incentive for cost-containment. Gramm's bill would also end the discrimination against the self-employed by making their health insurance costs tax-deductible, as they are for those working for companies; and tackle the abuses of tort lawyers in medical malpractice. One hundred thirty House Republicans, including Gingrich and Michel, have cosponsored similar legislation with their Affordable Health Care Now Act.

Republicans in Congress see encouraging similarities between the health plan and last spring's budget. Clinton is starting with a lower base of support than he did last February, and the more citizens understand that Clinton is proposing a government-run health care system, the less they like it: A *Washington Post* poll of October 7-10 finds that support for the plan has fallen from 56 to 51 percent, while opposition has increased from 24 to 39 percent. Fifty-seven percent oppose increasing taxes to pay for the plan. Only 19 percent believe the plan will improve health care, while 34 percent believe quality will fall. Forty-seven percent believe the plan will hurt "people like them."

Phil Gramm has set up twenty town hall meetings around the nation to point out the true nature and cost of the Clinton drive for government control over health care. Even moderate Democrats are reminding Clinton that the government has been off in its estimates of previous entitlement costs. Medicare, enacted in 1965, was predicted to cost $9 billion annually by 1990. The actual cost was $106 billion. Medicaid, which cost $1 billion when passed in 1965, now costs $76 billion a year.

Gingrich argues that there are sixty-five or seventy Democrats who support Jim Cooper's (D-Tenn.) managed-competition alternative to Clinton (or even prefer a more market-based approach), and believes that thirty more Democrats in marginal seats are so weakened by their vote for the unpopular Clinton tax increase that they will not be able to vote for socialized medicine next summer before the 1994 election. These are Republican targets for a coalition win.

And coalitions are building outside of Congress. Republicans view the threat to privacy inherent in having all one's health records on a credit card as a political weakness. Hillary Clinton's allies' insistence that any health plan fund abortions flies in the face of the Hyde Amendment, opposing such government funding. And the National Federation of Independent Businesses understands that big business will be bought off by the Clinton agreements to have taxpayers take over General Motors' early retirees' health costs, and that small business must fight the plan alone, without expecting help from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce or Washington trade associations. NFIB understands it must make the case that a "mandate" is just another word for a tax. Similarly, voters who saw through Mondale's use of "compassion" will understand that "security"—which James Carville is urging Clinton to repeat like a mantra—is another code word for higher taxes, not to mention empowering a political class that believes Americans cannot run their lives without substantial direction from people who went to Yale Law School.

The next year will determine whether a coalition of what Bob Dole calls "Big Government, Big Unions, and Big Business" can reshape America into a social democracy. Republican strategist Bill Kristol compares Clinton's grab of 14 percent of the American economy to the German decision to invade Russia in 1941. If Clinton takes Moscow, he will permanently shift the balance of political power to the party of government. If Republican resistance turns into his Stalingrad, a hollow liberalism could lose everything. ❐

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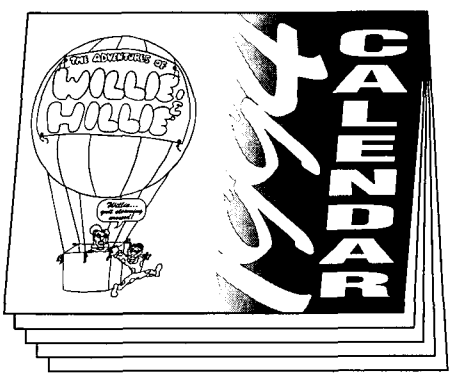

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Stop Me Before I Don't Shoot!

by Geoffrey Norman

The old pioneer spirit was made up of many parts, one of which was a sense that sometimes it came down to kill or be killed. The first European settlers had to feed themselves—there was game but they had to kill it. They had to find shelter; trees were abundant but they had to be dropped, topped, and notched or ripped into boards. And then, there were hostile animals—human and animal—that had to be either tamed or killed. When there was a grizzly at the door, you would reach for your piece and hope your primer powder was dry. Even if it meant leaving your late twentieth-century descendants with a terrible and unrelieved sense of guilt, the choice was what nowadays is called a no-brainer.

But every day one is reminded of just how anemic the blood of Americans has become. People whose ancestors hanged horse thieves now put signs reading "radio already stolen" in the windows of their cars. From being the kind of people who would stand up to a grizzly with a black powder Hawken, Americans have declined to the point where they are rendered helpless by the threat of a raccoon.

Yes. One of those animals with the bandit eyes and the charming habit of first washing the things they are going to eat. The same animal whose fur Davy Crockett wore on his head at the Alamo and Scott Fitzgerald wore around his shoulders at the Dartmouth game, that common mammal (cousin to the bear, by the way) that never gets much bigger than the average Springer Spaniel, has East Coast suburbanites living in fear and calling for the government—any government—to do something.

Last summer, a story called "Rabies in the Suburbs" appeared in the *New York Times*'s "Editorial Notebook" section. Its author, Susanna Rodell, described in detail her experience with a raccoon, at her home in Westchester County. Her ordeal began when one of her children screamed to her that there was "an animal at the door." What she found was a "very unhappy and bedraggled-looking raccoon, missing half its tail . . . peering through the screen."

Ms. Rodell told her children to stay inside. Then she picked up the telephone and called the cops.

To handle a raccoon.

An officer arrived ten minutes later (which is one reason to live in Westchester County) and found that the raccoon had climbed a tree in the backyard. "It wasn't foaming at the mouth," Ms. Rodell reports, plainly aware of the possibility that the animal was rabid. "But it was panting visibly, and flies buzzed around its head."

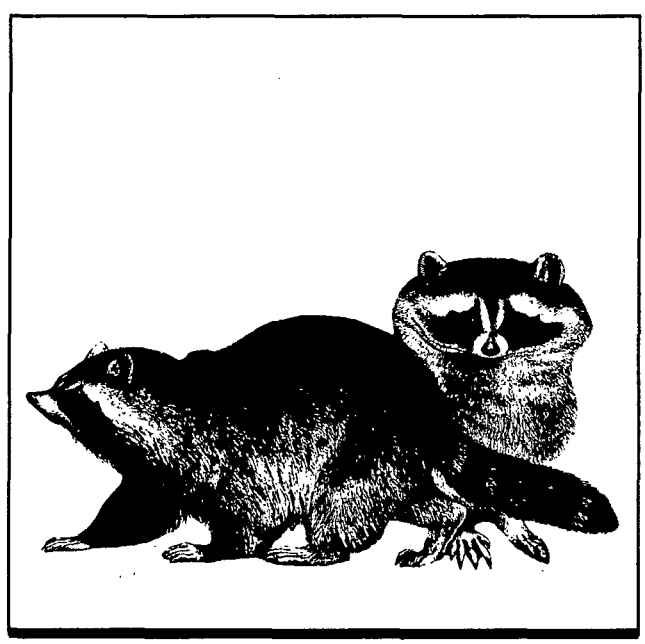
The policeman told Ms. Rodell he couldn't do anything about it. But he assured her that "If it has rabies, it'll die soon and fall out of the tree."

Rabies, as both the policeman and Ms. Rodell presumably knew, had reached epidemic levels in the northeast, especially among raccoons. Animals—and people—get rabies when they are bitten by an already infected animal. If it is not diagnosed (which is tricky) and promptly treated (which is painful), rabies is always fatal. When the pioneers encountered an animal that was rabid, or possibly rabid, there was nothing ambiguous in their response.

Ms. Rodell and the Westchester policeman were considerably less decisive. He had said there was nothing he could do. And, apparently, there was nothing Ms. Rodell was willing to do. Not on her own, anyway. So the helpful lawman suggested that she might want to call a "trapper."

She located a "licensed trapper of nuisance wildlife." (Licensed?) He told her his fee was $65 per animal caught. Some of his competitors charged three times as much and some, he said, "even charged consultation fees, like a brain surgeon or something."

The price, evidently, seemed steep to Ms. Rodell. She called the Executive Deputy Commissioner of the State Department of Environment Conservation (who probably could have handled the problem by hitting the animal over the head with his title) and was told that, while there were "public officials who can remove



Geoffrey Norman is a contributing editor of FYI.

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a rabid animal, they were scattered haphazardly through the state." So in some communities, "a resident has no option except a private trapper."

And if a person couldn't afford one?

Well, said the Executive Deputy Commissioner, "In this situation some people exercise self-help."

Ms. Rodell then asked, "In other words, they shoot the animal?"

"Or bash it over the head," the Executive Deputy Commissioner suggested helpfully.

But Ms. Rodell, it seems, could not take a hint:

> I kept the kids indoors while [the raccoon] spent two unhappy days moving from branch to branch in the old maple tree. Then one morning it was gone. I have no way of knowing whether it later "interacted" with any of my neighbors' pets or children. Thus, there's a small danger that some creature in the neighborhood—animal or human—could be carrying the virus, which is asymptomatic until just days before the victim dies. I still worry that in my county, at least, there are no public officials who can remove what is clearly a public danger. If you can't afford the services of [a trapper], you're stuck—and so are all your neighbors—with a lethal threat.

So Ms. Rodell's children were forced to stay inside—and the lives of her neighbors threatened—because of an animal that probably didn't weigh thirty pounds. All because Ms. Rodell could not bring herself to do what the pioneers would have done in a heartbeat—kill the damned raccoon and bury it too deep for another animal to dig it up. If she did not have a gun, then the flat blade of a shovel would do nicely. Then she could use the shovel to dig the grave. Save her a trip. And if she couldn't bring herself to kill an obviously dying and diseased (and very likely rabid) animal, then couldn't she have called around the neighborhood? Surely somebody in Westchester owns a 22. Somewhere in that suburban oasis, there must be someone with the nerve to face down a sick raccoon.

Then again, maybe not. Which is worse news than any epidemic of rabies, a disease that comes and goes. This other thing, though, must surely be terminal. ❐

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What It Takes

by James Bowman

Some three hours into *Gettysburg*, the new four-hour-plus Civil War epic from Ted Turner Productions, J.E.B. Stuart, hitherto AWOL, turns up with his cavalry after two days of battle. Robert E. Lee, played by Martin Sheen, tells him that there are some officers who are of the opinion that Stuart has badly let the side down. "If the general will please give me the names of those officers . . ." begins Stuart before Lee cuts him off: "There isn't time for that," he says, referring to Stuart's obvious intention to seek satisfaction for the insult. The weary viewer, however, is inclined to ask: Why not? Why isn't there time? There seems to be time for everything else, including fine-sounding speeches about what they are all fighting for, several instances of disagreement between General Longstreet (Tom Berenger) and Lee about tactics, and at least three reminders that Col. Joshua Chamberlain (Jeff Daniels) is holding the flank of the Union army on Little Round Top. There is even time for General Stuart to come up with something else (his resignation) that Lee tells him there isn't time for.

This leisurely unfolding is not necessarily a bad thing. The film is in effect an attempt to translate into cinematic terms that great masculine art form, the military epic, which saw its best days—in mainstream Western culture anyway—well before Columbus sailed the ocean blue. Great epic poems like the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, *Beowulf*, or *The Song of Roland* achieve their effects not by the concision that most other poetry aspires to but by something like its opposite. Epic time is slow time. As in opera where the characters have to sing for ten minutes before they do anything—including, usually, dying—epic heroes wind up for a good long speech before and after they smite or are smitten. The speed with which events happen in battle has to be slowed in order for each nuance of significance to be teased out of them.

The trouble is that epic just does not work very well on the silver screen. Movies are too realistic a medium. They resist the kind of heavy stylization that is the essence of epic conventions. Ted Turner's movie (directed by Ronald Maxwell) is itself a little like Pickett's charge: a noble effort in a losing cause. But it could have been made more successful, more interesting anyway, if it had had a little more the courage of its conventions. No doubt epic speeches about obsolete politics (saving the Union versus states' rights) are necessary, but could we not also hear some on the sense of honor that has always been the epic hero's defining characteristic and that still is principally what makes men willing to risk death in battle?

Probably not. The whole panoply of distinctively masculine and military values has fallen on hard times. You only have to look at the casting of Jeff Daniels as Chamberlain. Looking even more hang-dog than usual with a silly walrus mustache, he harangues a company of Maine volunteers who have mutinied and whom he is trying to graft onto his own Maine regiment with a kind of New Age version of soldiership. Here is none of the ethnocentric, racist, sexist, and probably fascist talk of Henry V before Harfleur—no appeals to Maine patriotism or the warlike qualities of Maine men or the chastity of Maine women; here are no exhortations to show their manhood. Instead, he bolsters their self-esteem by sympathizing with their grievance, tells them that he's not going to shoot them, and assures them that, "whether you fight or not, that's up to you." He goes on to say, sounding like Wilfred Brimley pitching breakfast cereal, that some men go to war for adventure and some because they're ashamed not to but most because it's "the right thing to do."

Humbug! People *talk* about going to war for adventure or high ideals, but when it comes down to stepping out in front of the musket balls and the canister shot, *everybody* does it because he's ashamed not to—which is another way of saying to avoid dishonor. The only other person in the whole of this long film to make any reference to this universal soldiers' motivation is one of the last of the recalcitrant Maine mutineers, who finally agrees to join the fight by saying, "Nobody's going to call me a coward." J.E.B. Stuart attempts to stand on his honor, but he is a ridiculous character and is cut off before he can get the word out of his mouth. There isn't time for any of that.

But what happens to our society when honor is treated dismissively, when it is no longer a shameful thing to be called a coward? Jeffrey R. Snyder in a splendid piece called "A Nation of Cowards" in the current issue of the *Public Interest* thinks that that time has already come. For the response of both our liberal and conservative elites to the threat of violent crime is to insist that we who are threatened should disarm ourselves and give the criminals what they want. We are urged to leave any timid remonstrance we might think it permissible to make against those who would kill, rape, or rob us to those who are charged with looking after such things—the professionals in the police and the criminal justice system.

Maybe this is what Joel Silver and Marco Brambilla had in mind when they made the Sylvester Stallone vehicle *Demolition Man*. In many ways a typi-

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cally Hollywoodish amalgam of H.G. Wells and Aldous Huxley (the heroine's name is Lenina Huxley—they don't care if you know whom they're ripping off), this film presents a world, supposedly only forty years away, that "has become a pussy-whipped, Brady Bunch version of itself." The people have become so docile and unused to violence that one man with a gun (Wesley Snipes) can destroy their whole society. It is a good idea, but the film isn't really all that interested in it. Instead it just wants to amuse us with its politically correct utopia where people can't smoke, drink, eat meat, or "exchange fluids" and the popular music is old commercial jingles. This a lot of fun, but when the lone gunman has to be disposed of, the gentle future folk have to call a cop from the past (Stallone) to do it for them.

There are a lot of films out now about the masculine ethos. *Judgment Night* is about four middle-class Chicago suburban guys who achieve their manhood (sort of; they still seem pretty wimpish to me) while being chased through a desolate urban landscape by a gang of vicious killers, but it is too far-fetched, the acting too poor, and the bad guys too ludicrously caricatured to say anything useful or interesting. *Rudy* and *Cool Runnings* are both heartwarming stories about lovable individuals, but neither the warriors of the Notre Dame football squad in the first nor the severe fellowship of the world's top bobsledders in the second are of much interest to the filmmakers. The real competitors are there only to turn aside from making war long enough to become sentimental about Rudy and the Jamaican bobsled team and to grant them a kind of symbolic, mascot status. That's a kind of honor, but not the kind we need to be more concerned about.

The Program is really much more about corruption in college football than it is about what it takes to win or the rite of passage to manhood, but there is one scene that has achieved a certain notoriety. The quarterback (Craig Sheffer) proves his guts and thus his title to leadership by lying down on the center line of a busy highway and daring the team's hotshots to join him. It is a rather extravagant and silly way of making the point anyway, but it has had to be cut by the studio because a couple of dimwits out in the real world tried the stunt and got run over. So it goes these days with what used to be one of the storyteller's two or three biggest subjects: what it takes to be a man. The very idea is alien to Hollywood, which tends to see sex roles in the same way that the makers of *The Crying Game* and, more recently, *M. Butterfly* see them.

In both those films, being a man or being a woman is not part of nature's destiny but a question of personal choice—that and a lot of really good make-up. It is just a matter of which mask we put on. As Jeremy Irons admits in *M. Butterfly*, the mystique of sex is a lie, but a lie that we want to believe. There is some truth in this view. The injunction to "be a man" would have no meaning to us if sex were merely biological. What else could an adult male person be? But we still have a residual cultural sense that one acts the part of a man by, for example, being brave in battle. Acting is lying—and you could say that cowardice is a kind of honesty about and hence indulgence of our feelings of fear. But if courage, like masculinity itself, is always to some degree a masquerade, it would be wrong to believe that it is only a masquerade.

At times that seems to be the view of *Farewell My Concubine* by Chen Kaige, our Movie of the Month and the second film about Chinese opera I saw in as many days after not having seen one in all my life before. Both it and *M. Butterfly* depend on the fact that it is traditional in Chinese opera (as it was in Elizabethan drama) for males to play female roles, and both exploit this fact in order to examine the whole question of sexual identity and its relation to love and loyalty. *M. Butterfly* is intriguing and well acted but it has a left-wing axe to grind and is too wrongheaded in its premises to hold a permanent place in our affections. *Farewell My Concubine*, however, uses the historical backdrop of revolutionary China to much better effect.

I am always a sucker for these *Dr. Zhivago*–style movies about ordinary individuals who are caught up in the sweep of vast historical events. The Chinese opera, like epic, is about heroism, and the opera of the title is about a defeated emperor's concubine who remains "faithful unto death." Does that heroic image bear any relation to the real world? The answer of the film seems to be that it does not. All three of the main characters, the Chinese opera stars Cheng Dieyi (Leslie Cheung) and Duan Xiaolou (Zhang Pengyi) and Xiaolou's wife Juxian (Gong Li) betray each other more than once. Faithfulness of any kind, let alone faithfulness unto death, seems a joke, as one set of demanding political masters succeeds another up until the enigmatical and not very satisfactory ending.

Yet Dieyi, who is personally the most treacherous of the three, does understand one sort of faithfulness: faithfulness to his art which, through all the vicissitudes of Chinese culture in the twentieth century, has kept alive the impossible heroic ideal. Moreover, the film's early scenes in the sadistic training school for performers in the opera (who, when successful, are treated like film stars in China) show what he has sacrificed for his art. "What does it take to become a star?" asks Dieyi as a young boy: "How many beatings? When will I ever enjoy such fame?" It is then that we know he has determined to do whatever it takes. And Roland or Beowulf would have understood the nature of that craving for fame, which is also called honor. Paradoxically, part of what it takes is the sacrifice of his masculinity, as he is required to play the female parts. Yet there are few characters in the movies today who know better what it means to be a man. ❐

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HAROLD LASKI: A LIFE ON THE LEFT

Isaac Kramnick and Barry Sheerman

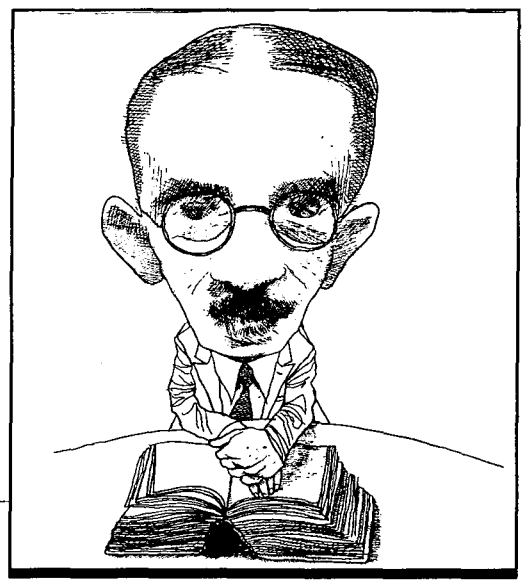
Viking Penguin (An Allen Lane Book) / 608 pages / $35

reviewed by JOHN MUGGERIDGE

Reading about the Left Book Club in Isaac Kramnick and Barry Sheerman's *Harold Laski: A Life on the Left* took me back to forty years ago. From 1936 until the club folded in 1948, Laski, together with his two Oxford classmates and fellow Marxists, John Strachey and Victor Gollancz, had had the job of deciding which manuscripts it would publish, and I vividly remember coming across their selections among my father's old review copies. They had flame-colored dust jackets and tocsin-sounding titles such as *The Coming Struggle for Power*, *The Battle for Peace*, *Forward from Liberalism*, and, most famous of all, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization*, minus the question mark Sidney and Beatrice Webb had originally ended it with. I also remember coming across some of their authors. All of them were apparently well-connected members of the upper middle class. We used to drive over to lunch with them, and they with us, at our respective summer places. At least one of them had a butler. R.T. Fyvel—who, as literary editor of *Tribune*, Britain's reddest newspaper after the *Daily Worker*, necessarily moved in their circle—once asked my sister and me to his daughter's Hunt Ball.

I have no memory of lunching with Harold Laski. He must have summered in a different county, for, as Kramnick and Sheerman make clear, he was a faithful participant in the rituals of gentlemanly far leftism. He fulminated against capitalism and delighted in the company of rich men, blasted privilege and fawned on those who dispensed it with an assiduity that few of his fellow country-house Communists could match. Moreover, unlike most of them, he really does seem to have looked up to his social superiors. Aristocrats in particular brought out the vassal in him. In describing to his friend, Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, the moral impression Lord Robert Cecil, for example, made on him, he said: "I went out feeling cleaner by contact with him."

Laski came to upper-crust socialism as an outsider. Hence, perhaps, the earnestness with which he propounded it. His father, an anti-Zionist Jewish textile millionaire from Manchester, had Harold educated with local gentiles to prove that he could hold his own among them. He more than held his own. His first non-Jewish headmaster, a Victorian campus leftist, converted him to socialism. By 17, he had moved on to birth control and women's rights. Meanwhile, the *Westminster Review* published his "The Scopes of Eugenics" which urged governments to promote fertility in clever, healthy couples and sterility in stupid, sickly ones. A year later, he secretly married a new woman who had gone to Sweden to study physiotherapy and discuss free love. They joined the suffragettes, in whose interest he tried unsuccessfully to blow up a suburban railway station. Weatherman-like, he fled abroad until the incident blew over. Finally, at Oxford, under the tutelage of H.A.L. Fischer, the most famous liberal historian of the day, Laski became what he remained for the rest of his life, a believing Marxist Whig.



But all of this belongs to a forgotten past. Who even remembers Laski, let alone his political philosophy? Certainly not the makers of modern history. Kramnick and Sheerman list six books and a dozen learned articles about Laski that have appeared since his death forty-three years ago. He gets mentioned in memoirs, often smilingly, but most often with references to his lifelong habit of lying—which Kramnick and Sheerman charitably call "myth-making."

A.J.P. Taylor, in *English History, 1914-1945*, makes three brief references to Laski, the longest and least scathing of which includes him among "the new enthusiasts for communism" in the thirties, who, "whatever their background . . . were highly educated intellectuals whose ideas and writings appealed to others of the same sort," while in *The Age of Roosevelt* Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., though admitting the importance of Laski's influence on Marxist thought in America, banishes him to the unvital periphery.

But according to Kramnick and Sheerman, Taylor and Schlesinger have got Laski wrong: he *isn't* peripheral. He belongs at center stage, and Kramnick and Sheerman, as they tell us in the prologue, mean to put him back there. In other words, they mean to rewrite modern British history.

Also modern U.S. history. Kramnick and Sheerman hark back to a time before the far left went anti-American. In Laski's day it was perfectly acceptable, even fashionable, for British radicals to admire the United States and believe that the prospects for socialism were brighter there than in their own country. Laski himself, who once claimed that FDR's gift for leadership was second only to that of Lenin, put his money on the New Deal. Kramnick and Sheerman have set themselves the task of proving that on both sides of the Atlantic, Laski's role in

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building our liberal world was a decisive one.

A fascinating thesis, and one would think, what with Kramnick being an American political scientist and Sheerman a Labour M.P., they would be ideally suited to develop it. Alas, they don't develop it. Their approach is too reverent. Revisionist history is always exciting, however meagerly the record supports it, but the 600-plus pages of *Harold Laski* revise nothing. What its authors give us is not new insights but old clichés. Their book is the life of a saint, lovingly and painstakingly told, but having in it nothing to stimulate the reader's historical imagination or even get him wondering what Laski was really like.

Take Laski's famous addiction to lying. All his friends noticed he was afflicted by it; even so, since most of them are dead and their books out of print, one has to give Kramnick and Sheerman some credit for not having covered it up. Nor can one blame them for putting it in the best possible light. Of course, they are going to highlight the occasions when Laski's fibs turned out to have some basis in truth. What they never do, however, is relate this habitual mendacity to his politics. Yet embracing constitutional Marxism clearly involves one in a form of self-deception. It might even be argued that Laski's claim that you could stop people from wanting to acquire property and make money out of it simply by getting a Labour government elected to pass the necessary legislation represented an even deeper descent into unreality than his invention that Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin had summoned him to 10 Downing Street to help end the foreign debt crisis. Why did he lie so adamantly both to and about himself? Was there something about having to hold his own for so long among gentiles which drove him to resort to fantasy? Kramnick and Sheerman don't even ask such questions—let alone offer an answer to them.

Speaking of lying puts one in mind of the Soviet Union. This is the subject on which Kramnick and Sheerman are at their worst. They say of the Cold War that "ideological excesses by the Stalinist left and the anti-communist Right allowed no breathing space for the democratic socialist alternative," as if socialism, not freedom, had been its central issue, and it had ended badly. No wonder, then, that they defend Laski's "reasonable" approach to Stalinist Russia. In their eyes Stalin simply went too far, or, as Laski put it, made mistakes.

If pro-Communist leftists are reasonable, then anti-Communist ones must be unreasonable; in other words they are not true leftists. This is why Kramnick and Sheerman either dismiss them as "cold warriors" or pretend they don't exist. One thing they never do is quote left-wing critics of Laski's softness towards Moscow. Thus, they reprint a paragraph by the anti-Communist Labourite Leonard Woolf commenting on Laski's intellectual prowess, while omitting without benefit of asterisks the following last sentence: "Harold's mind, when properly used, was a wonderful intellectual instrument, though as years went by he was inclined to take the easy way and misuse it both for thinking and writing."

So the question remains: Why dredge up Laski's outdated and exploded leftism? In a world hard-pressed for ideological consistency, its unabashedly fundamentalist approach may be just what is needed. *Laski* has already appeared to approving reviews in England. Now it has crossed the Atlantic. Laski himself made the same move in the 1930s. The young men and women he helped at that time to radicalize were in their turn the parents of the sixties "rebels." And it was members of that second post-Laski generation that came to power with Bill Clinton last January. They're eager for change (unlike all other North Americans), but one big problem continues to dog them: what William B. Murchison, in a recent *Human Life Review*, calls their formlessness. They have an agenda but no theology. Saint Harold might just be the person to provide them with one. Certainly his C.V. looks just right. He championed the 1919 Boston police strikers, supported Sacco and Vanzetti, agreed with the New Deal, defended FDR's decision to pack the Supreme Court, and favored an undivided Palestine. Even his pro-Communist stand, now that the Cold War is over, no longer hurts. What more useful prophet could Clinton Democrats come up with than this scholarly Marxist-feminist moderate for whom the U.S. Constitution did not

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just guarantee the rights of individual Americans but gave their government a passport to socialism?

Harold Laski is connected with Laski in one other interesting way: through its publishers. Allen Lane founded Penguin Books in 1935. When the Left Book Club folded thirteen years later, it was Penguin that took over at the cutting, i.e., socialist, edge of literary and academic writing. Now Penguin Lane is publishing the life of one of the founders of the Left Book Club. Its readers are to be the third post-Laski generation of American students. I feel certain that Poli Sci departments across the continent are even now putting copies of it on reserve in their college libraries. Like the movie *Dead Again*, *Harold Laski: A Life on the Left* is about reincarnation. ❐

CASE CLOSED: LEE HARVEY OSWALD AND THE ASSASSINATION OF JFK

Gerald Posner

Random House / 607 pages / $25

reviewed by RICHARD W. CARLSON

I saw a T-shirt recently that said, "ELVIS KILLED JFK," an explanation no more far-fetched than others I've seen in print over the years. More than 2,000 books (forget about magazine and newspaper features) have been published about the events in Dallas in November 1963. Crackpot writers, many with a strong political agenda, and zealous conspiracy buffs have offered us quite a list of suspects and co-conspirators, including Lyndon Johnson; Carlos Marcello, the New Orleans Mob Boss; E. Howard Hunt; Fidel Castro; Frank Sturgis; three tramps in a boxcar near Dealey Plaza (some claim E. Howard Hunt was one of them, which puts him on this list twice); J. Edgar Hoover; Santo Traficante, the Florida Mob Boss; Jack Ruby; Clay Shaw; Officer J.D. Tippit; James Earl Ray; Sam Giancana, the Chicago Mob Boss; Corsican mercenaries (or were they Corsican *missionaries*?); the CIA; Jack Dragna, the Los Angeles Mob Boss; Jimmy Hoffa and the Central States Pension Fund Board of Trustees; Bunker and Nelson Hunt; David Ferrie and the Civil Air Patrol; Ray Patriarca, the New England Mob Boss; the Mormon Church; and Peter, Paul and Mary. (Okay, I admit I added PP&M just because I don't like them. I also admit I don't have evidence to support the charge—though the three have clearly been conspiring about something for years. Besides, a political animus against figures like E. Howard Hunt has caused many leftist buffs to force him and others they don't like into the public line-up of suspects. This seems to be acceptable conduct, and I can't recall anyone objecting to this weird McCarthyism in the mainstream press. So who am I to flout convention?)

Richard W. Carlson is president and chief executive officer of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Gerald Posner's *Case Closed* knocks the buffs and the loonies for a loop. The book has been the subject of much positive ink in the American press since it was released in the fall, all of it deserved. *U.S. News and World Report* did a cover story, concurring with Posner's findings that a review of the evidence points conclusively to the guilt of Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone.

Oswald was a pathetically inadequate, mean-spirited loser. He was without manners, grace, expressions of simple kindness or decency, or any sense of humor. He was a piggish, self-pitying cracker whose closest friend described him as a "semi-educated hillbilly," none too bright. He was also a zealous leftist who talked endlessly about the plight of the working class when he wasn't beating the tar, so to speak, out of his wife for sneaking a puff on a cigarette. When you read the details of his sluggish existence, the murder of a president seems reasonably within his capabilities.

But what about the piece-of-junk Italian rifle Oswald bought through the mail, the one he used to try and plug Gen. Edwin Walker a few months before JFK's killing?

Mark Lane describes it as "inaccurate and slow." (One of the delicious scenes of modern times was that of terrorized attorneys Charles Garry and Mark Lane crashing through the Guyana jungle trying to escape the Kool-Aid solution being pushed by their client and friend Jim Jones upon his followers in Jonestown.) Robert Sam Anson, a writer generally regarded as less certifiable than Lane, ridicules the rifle, too. Anson says that the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, with its four-power telescopic sight, is called the "Humanitarian Rifle," apparently because the Italian Army couldn't hit a pizza parlor door at twenty feet with it. Whatever jokes might come to mind about the Italian Army, the fact is, as Posner neatly demonstrates, the rifle was deadly accurate, and with a four-power scope almost anyone would have performed as a marksman.

Oswald, of course, had been a normally accomplished shot in the Marine Corps. The four-power sight needed "virtually no adjustment" at a distance of less than 200 yards. The rifle was as accurate as the U.S. Army's M-14 and its bullets travel as fast as and are heavier than the Russian AK-47s. One FBI expert is quoted as

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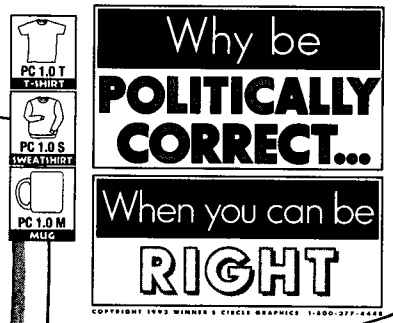

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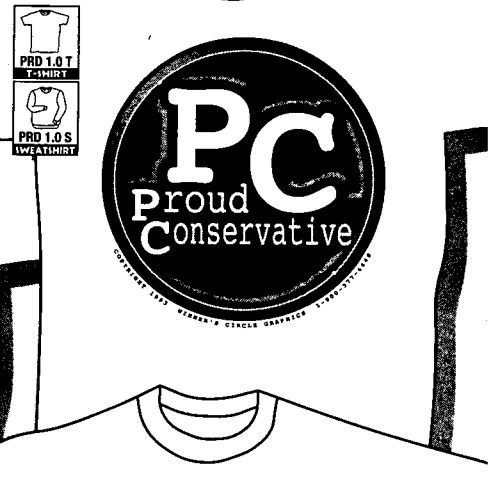

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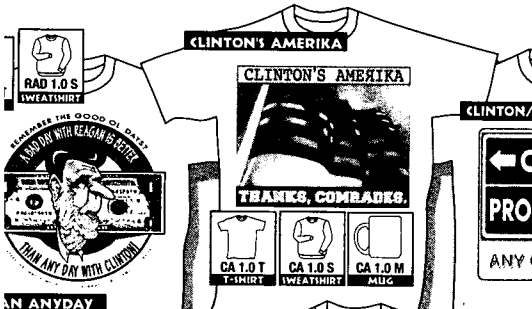

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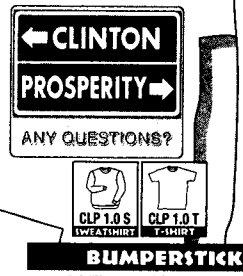

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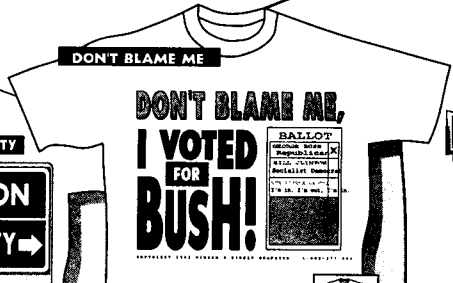

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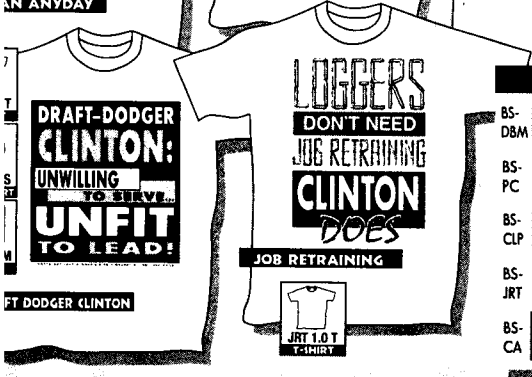
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describing the bullets fired at the president and John Connally as being like "a flying drill." To this day, some big-game hunters in Africa use the very same rifle for elephant hunting because of its accuracy and power. The FBI concluded it was a *very* good weapon for assassination. If you are like me, a casual reader of JFK assassination stories over the years, you will recall being left with the very opposite impression by the buffs and their fellow-traveling scriveners.

A great deal of the fantasy spun by the buffs has derived from the world of coincidence. Buffs believe that the coincidences around the assassination and around the cast of hundreds who were connected in some fashion to Dallas or Kennedy or Oswald or Ruby et al. are too many to be genuine and must therefore be conspiratorial in origin. Wading through buff literature is an exercise in coincidence-gathering—connecting one disparate dot to another and demonstrating that they all have some meaning. But buffs ignore how remarkably easy it is to make connections between people, institutions, and events across generations, professions, class lines, and geographic distance in this country.

You have come to the right place for this lecture. I collect coincidences. When I find one I like I write it down and drop it in a file. I'm like the fellow I knew in Los Angeles—a TV weatherman named Dr. George Fishbeck—who collected odors. He had trapped hundreds of them in bottles (with labels like "Field of Rye after the Rains, Coalinga, CA 1972"), but he was damned if he knew what to do with them. He didn't know any other collectors. There was no *Odor Newsletter* to read and there were no collectors' conventions he could attend. Similarly, I don't know what to do with my coincidences other than savor them. One thing that occurs is that they could be used to demonstrate the odd circumstances of my own associations over the years and hence draw a reasonable inference that I too played a role in the JFK assassination:

• Lee Harvey Oswald's favorite TV show growing up in the fifties, according to his brother Robert, was "I Lived Three Lives," the dramatization of an FBI informant who posed as a Communist. The star of this early show was Richard Carlson, my namesake and an actor whose AFTRA dues were regularly sent to me when I worked for ABC-TV in Hollywood. I met one of his sons once. What we discussed is not known.

• In the fall of 1963, not long before the assassination, I had lunch with Melvin "The King of Torts" Belli, who would soon represent Jack Ruby for shooting Oswald. We ate in Jack's restaurant in the financial district of San Francisco. (You don't think "Jack's" was chosen at random, do you?)

• Lee Harvey Oswald listened to the Voice of America when he was stationed in Japan. He was an "avid" VOA listener when he lived in the USSR. Witnesses said he often tuned in at night. I was the director of the Voice of America for almost six years. I was accused many times of working for the CIA and was also accused of sending coded messages over the air, disguised sometimes as balalaika music.

• I was in the stag line at the coming-out party for Janet Auchincloss, Jackie Kennedy's half-sister, in Newport a few years before the assassination. Jackie Kennedy's mother, Mrs. Auchincloss, owned the house one block up 31st Street from my garage in Washington. The house where Jackie Kennedy lived after the JFK killing, 3038 N Street, is directly across the street from mine and is still owned by the widow of Averell Harriman. (And why do you think she fled to Paris?)

Incredible as it may seem, the house Mrs. Kennedy bought after leaving Harriman's is about a half-dozen houses down from mine on the same side of the street and directly across from Ben Bradlee and Sally Quinn's place. Ben's first wife was a sister of Cord Meyer's wife Mary, and Mary had an affair with JFK, even smoked dope with him at the White House. Worse, I have been seen having lunch on a number of occasions with Cord Meyer, once a very high-ranking CIA official and the former brother-in-law of Ben Bradlee. At least once we were seen at the Four Seasons Hotel in Georgetown, right above the canal where Cord's ex-wife and JFK's lover was mysteriously murdered. Nearby diners were unable to overhear the conversation, but I was seen handing Meyer a paper of some kind.

• I knew Gary ("Mr. U-2") Powers in Los Angeles and was seen talking with him at least twice at cocktail parties before his mysterious death in a helicopter. Oswald once worked at a U-2 base and lived in the USSR when Powers's spy-plane was shot down.

• I have purchased a number of canes from and often visited with Billy Rau, ostensibly an antique dealer, at 630 Royal Street, New Orleans. It was at 570 Royal Street that Lee Harvey Oswald got into the heated debate with anti-Castro activist Carlos Bringuier. Billy Rau's whereabouts at the time are not known.

• I was standing near General Edwin Walker in Oxford, Mississippi, in the fall of 1962 when he was arrested for inciting a riot. Six months later, in April 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald tried to shoot General Walker with the same gun he later used to kill John F. Kennedy.

• Lee Harvey Oswald was wildly pro-Castro. I once had responsibility for the running of Radio Martí into Cuba, a major irritant to Castro and his government.

• I met recently with the TV journalist Robert MacNeil in New York. Immediately after the shooting of JFK in Dallas, MacNeil, who was a reporter traveling in the motorcade at the time, raced into the Book Depository lobby and asked a man who was running out the door where the telephones were. The man pointed them out. Later MacNeil identified the man as Lee Harvey Oswald.

• A co-worker of Lee Harvey Oswald's at the Texas Book Depository told Oswald in which direction the motorcade would be passing the building. His name was James Jarman. My partner on the Ocean City police department in the summer of 1962 was James Jarman. Admittedly they appear to be different people—but who can be certain?

The fact is that inexplicable coincidences are seldom sinister—but one can easily make them sound that way—and they often have no meaning beyond what they appear to be at their most superficial. Mostly, inexplicable coincidences are mostly just inexplicable.

Gerald Posner has written a great book and one that is badly needed in our fractured, suspicious society. Unless you really believe that was J. Edgar Hoover in stack heels and a black taffeta dress toting a sniper's rifle up on the grassy knoll (and if you do, well, hey, I can feel your pain), then Posner will convince you that Lee Harvey Oswald did it all by himself and that Gerald Posner picked the right title for his book. Case closed. ❐

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THE GREAT MELODY: A THEMATIC BIOGRAPHY OF EDMUND BURKE

Conor Cruise O'Brien

University of Chicago Press / 679 pages / $34.95

reviewed by KENNETH MINOGUE

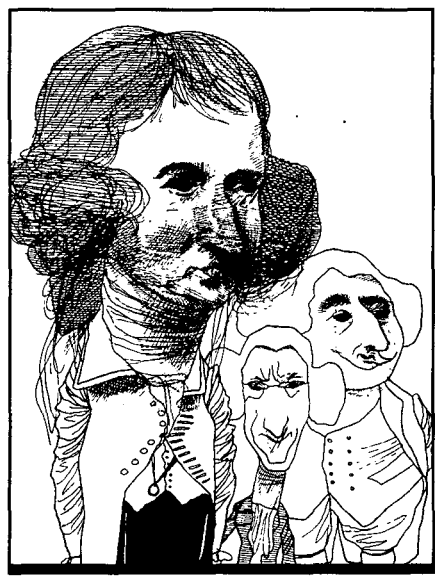
In a vulgar, journalistic sense, modern conservatism may be dated from May 6, 1791. Like most things political, it began with an act of violence: the deliberate rupture by Edmund Burke of his long-standing friendship with Charles James Fox. These men had for two decades led the Whig party in the House of Commons. Together they had fought George III's policy of taxing the Americans, not to mention opposing the kings' backstage influence on British politics. Together they framed the East India Bill and impeached Warren Hastings for corruption. Both were ardent for freedom and constitutionality. Burke was Fox's mentor, the thinker of the party. Yet in 1791 their friendship collapsed, and a quite new political tendency found its voice.

It may seem odd to call conservatism a "new" political tendency, because the history of mankind largely exhibits little else. But the unreflective conservatism of earlier days has little in common with the sophisticated intellectual construction Burke created in response to the revolutionary project of managing society by theory. He even created it as a Whig, not a Tory, and his conception of government had to wait more than a generation before it finally got its name.

The occasion of Burke's quarrel with Fox was, of course, the French Revolution, which Fox had hailed as "one of the most glorious events in the history of mankind." Burke took a whole book to explain why Fox was wrong. *Reflections on the Revolution in France* argued that the revolutionaries aimed to destroy everything valuable in the European tradition. In supporting the revolution, Fox was threatening the very constitution of Britain itself. As Burke declared in the House: "He had done his duty at the price of his friend, their friendship was at an end."

Cobbett's *Parliamentary History* records the sequel: "Mr. *Fox* rose to reply: but his mind was so much agitated, and his heart so much affected by what had fallen from Mr. Burke, that it was some minutes before he could proceed. Tears trickled down his cheeks, and he strove in vain to give utterance to feeling that dignified and exalted his nature." Fox proceeded eventually to review his disagreements with Burke, record their long years of friendship, and hope—vainly in fact—that "his right honorable friend would think on past times" and recognize that their association might survive their differences.

These sonorous words reveal a political culture a world away from our own. Its depth of both thought and feeling puts to shame the superficial knowingness of politicians in our own time. But the important thing is what this moment of birth tells us about the real character of conservatism.



The debate on the French Revolution is a model of political understanding. It was, for example, brilliantly employed by Hans Morgenthau to explore the response of the West to Communism. America after 1945 confronted an international ideology on the march, an ideology not only similar to French Jacobinism but actually descended from it. Burke the crusader against an "armed doctrine," Fox the liberal enthusiast for the rights of man, and Pitt the pragmatic believer in the politics of business as usual are archetypal political actors caught in the bright lights of a crisis that illuminated the realities of the modern world.

Now we have Conor Cruise O'Brien's *The Great Melody: A Thematic Biography of Edmund Burke*, which follows in fascinating historical detail Burke's response to those great events. O'Brien has found in Burke an Irishman who speaks to him across the centuries. This is no mere metaphor, as the careful reader of O'Brien's dedication ("For Deirdre Levinson Bergson who brought the Message from the Master") will find if he perseveres as far as the second footnote on page 536. (Not p. 534, as the preface has it.) O'Brien actually has Burke speaking to him.

He has written a big book in every sense. He is the irresistible talker in a Dublin pub conducting a knockabout seminar full of excellent talkers. Burke's birth is delayed for seventy pages while O'Brien tears into Burke's modern detractors, especially the followers of the historian Lewis Namier, who relentlessly denigrated Burke in order to exhibit eighteenth-century politics as nothing but jobbery. And at the end there is a jolly epistolary conversation with Isaiah Berlin, who was foolish enough to think that Burke was a "reactionary" political thinker. Berlin hardly lasts one round in the ring with O'Brien.

Writing about Burke has always been hell. A Shakespeare in prose, he ruthlessly appropriates everything written about him by forcing writers to use his own incomparable words. O'Brien grasps this nettle by describing his book as an anthology with comments. At one point Burke is given seven pages at a stretch before O'Brien interrupts. But Burke is Burke, and it's the right thing to do. →

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The fact that Burke was right about the French Revolution, and the liberal Fox was wrong, is one of the founding strengths of conservatism. His success is explicable at many levels of thought. The central point is perhaps most concisely made in a sentence from Burke on the East India Bill of 1783—a sentence that ought by law to be inscribed over the portals of every university in the United States as a warning to theory-crazed youth:

> I feel an insuperable reluctance in giving my hand to destroy any established institution of government, upon a theory, however plausible it may be.

The French revolutionaries destroyed the *ancien régime* in the name of a theory about the rights of man. Burke's opposition thus follows by the strictest logic. And the strength of that syllogism becomes clear when we remember that it was fully worked out long before the killing of the king and the onset of the Terror.

Fox and the other Whigs got it wrong because they took more notice of aspirations than of actions. The rhetoric of the rights of man bewitched them. Progressive hopes for the future made them insensitive to present nastiness. No one had yet told them that in politics you can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, but they already had the idea. And when Burke went to town on the ill-bred way the mob treated Marie Antoinette, their first impulse was to scoff at such superficiality. Their attitude was summed up in a famous phrase from Tom Paine in his reply to Burke: "He pities the plumage but forgets the dying bird."

How do we explain Burke's deeper insight? Much of what he says appeals to experience, but more than most people realize, his penetration results from pure philosophical sophistication. It is easy, for example, to confuse reform, which Burke approved, with innovation, which he detested. The Whigs made this mistake, and it took Burke to point to the simple but revealing fact that the revolutionaries wanted to change *everything*. Sometimes the logic comes in the form of a fast dialectical karate chop, as when in the *Reflections*, Burke remarks that he is far from denying the *real* rights of man, among which he includes a right to be restrained. Burke understood, as the new Whigs did not, that order is the achievement of centuries. When restraint fails, the result is civil war—or the condition of the inner cities.

Burke has a moral vision that allows him to see through the surfaces at which the eyes of lesser men glaze over. Human action reveals virtues and vices that the social order must channel. To allow avarice, love of power, sectarian enthusiasm, lust for domination, and their like to escape the bonds of law is what Burke means by corruption, and some of his descriptions of it are positively bloodcurdling. One woman fainted away when Burke described the horrors inflicted on Indians who failed to pay up. It would be hard to imagine an understanding of the world more at odds with the value-indifferent social instrumentalism of today.

It is precisely for this reason that Burke is an embarrassment to modern conservatives. Wherever they begin to approach profundity, Burke is already way ahead of them, yet all that lofty eighteenth-century prose cannot but look a little pompous, even precious, when set down beside the sound bites and one-liners of contemporary rhetoric.

The reason is that Burke's conservatism is solidly locked into a religious faith, whereas most modern conservatism springs directly from skepticism about the possibilities of politics. Burke responded no doubt to a culture deeply divided between religious faiths, but it was morally homogeneous in a way we can barely dream of. Indeed, what makes Burke a figure of extraordinary fascination is that he lived at just the moment when utopianism was escaping the timid prose of philosophers and invading the streets.

Burke had, in fact, been a kind of ideological seismologist all his life. In youth he had detected the subversive tremors of Voltaire, and the rumblings of Rousseau showed up unmistakably on his Richter scale. Rousseau he detested. Nor does he mince words about the philosopher whose response to fatherhood was, again and again, to deposit the baby on the steps of a foundlings' home:

> He melts with tenderness for those only who touch him by the remotest relation, and then, without one natural pang, casts away, as a sort of offal and excrement, the spawn of his disgustful amours, and sends his children to the hospital of foundlings . . . [the revolutionaries] erect statues to a wild, ferocious, low-minded, hard-hearted father, of fine general feelings; a lover of his kind, but a hater of his kindred.

The contrast again is between doctrine and conduct, between fancy words and low action. It is a variant of Burke's focus on what the revolutionaries actually did by contrast with the Foxite susceptibility to verbal declarations. The real secret of this political earthquake, Burke believed, was the harnessing of religion to the destruction of religion. The Revolution was the direct outcome of the ideas of frivolous and libertine men. What he accurately predicted, in considerable detail and step by step, was derived from a sophisticated moral and religious analysis of the human condition. Burke has here a timelessness amazing in one who generally wrote in direct response to the events of the day.

What, for example, could be more dazzlingly up-to-the-moment than a remark about politicians made in his late, pessimistic response to the French revolution:

> In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. . . . The calculators compute them out of their sense. The jesters and buffoons [i.e. journalists] shame them out of everything grand and elevated . . .

Burke ennobles all he touches, and even in reviewing O'Brien I cannot resist his charm and intelligence. He demands to be let out, and I shall end, as O'Brien ends, with some remarks from the *Reflections* that are obviously Burke's comments on political correctness:

> Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body . . . ❐

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MORTAL GAMES: THE TURBULENT GENIUS OF GARRY KASPAROV

Fred Waitzkin

Putnam / 302 pages / $24.95

reviewed by CRAIG S. LERNER

"Chess," the former world champion Bobby Fischer explained, "is like war on a board. The object is to crush the other man's mind. I like to see 'em squirm." Current champion Garry Kasparov agrees. "When you beat your opponent," he says, "you destroy his ego. The public must see that chess is a violent sport." But not since Bobby Fischer's retirement in 1972 has the alleged violence and drama of chess competition drawn a mass audience of Americans.

In *Mortal Games*, Fred Waitzkin continues his efforts to reacquaint Americans with the joys of chess. His first book, *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, was a captivating portrait of his son Josh, a chess prodigy. The book poignantly described father and son's entrance into the chess world, in which eccentric men of recondite genius study such arcana as the Breyer Variation of the Ruy Lopez and Ljubojevic's Najdorf-Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defense. Though his son's triumphs thrilled Waitzkin, his joy was tempered by a growing awareness that the pursuit of chess excellence necessarily excluded all other endeavors—with possibly calamitous psychological consequences. The ghost of Bobby Fischer, who succumbed to insanity after winning the championship, haunted the book's landscape.

Searching for Bobby Fischer was made consumer-friendly when adapted for the silver screen: God forbid that Hollywood disturb the sentimental belief that all good things are compatible, and that nice guys finish first. While the movie's Josh Waitzkin was a gentle soul, the real Josh, now a 16-year-old international master, admitted recently, "You do have to hate your opponent during the game. Every psychological power goes into ripping your opponent apart." As for the movie's suggestion that a child need not specialize in chess in order to excel, Waitzkin the father told an interviewer, "If I had it to do over again, I'd probably encourage him to study [chess] a little more. If you're lucky in life, you're gifted in one or maybe two things. Then it's work."

Josh plays only a bit part in *Mortal Games*, a profile of the 30-year-old world champion Garry Kasparov. In a demonstration match in 1988, Kasparov played fifty-nine American schoolchildren simultaneously; Josh was one of only two opponents to manage a draw. Upon being introduced to Kasparov at a Manhattan party over a year later, Waitzkin awkwardly mentioned the demonstration match. "Your son is Josh?" the champion immediately responded. Kasparov recalled not only Josh's name, but also the defense Josh had adopted, and the final position of the other drawn match.

Soon thereafter, Waitzkin secured permission to play Boswell to Kasparov's Johnson, trailing the great man across the world. The book focuses on Kasparov's third defense of his crown, a 24-game match in 1990 with the Soviet grandmaster and former champion Anatoly Karpov, but Waitzkin also finds time to relate anecdotes and conversations from Martha's Vineyard to Paris to Moscow.

Kasparov, Waitzkin suggests, thirsts for battle on numerous fronts. While preparing for combat with Karpov, Kasparov also struggled with the autocratic International Chess Federation (FIDE). (After the completion of the book, Kasparov made good on his threats to break ranks with FIDE; under the auspices of a competing organization, he recently played and won a championship match with the English grandmaster Nigel Short.) Kasparov was also at the forefront of a rebellion against Mikhail Gorbachev; he accuses Gorbachev of instigating anti-Armenian pogroms in 1990 in order to solidify Soviet control over the non-Russian republics. Kasparov, who is half-Armenian, was in Baku at the time and narrowly escaped the bloodshed.

Waitzkin frequently breaks off his account of a chess game to describe Kasparov's ventures as editorialist, entrepreneur, and politician. He strains to show Kasparov as more human, and humane, than the caricature of the monomaniacal chess wizard (portraying, for example, his loving relationship with his young wife, Masha), but the champion's smiling mask occasionally slips. "When you have to fight every day from a young age, your soul can be contaminated," he confesses.

Although Kasparov's political beliefs are democratic, he is typically tyrannical in his relations with others. He caters above all to himself and expects his circle of followers to do the same. His proclaimed interest in spreading the gospel of chess throughout the world is difficult to fathom, given that he is almost completely contemptuous of all the chess players he encounters. The world according to Kasparov is divided into men of championship caliber—women, he maintains, lack the competitive fire—and the humdrum, mediocre rest. The only active player whose chess ability Kasparov respects is his long-time and much-detested foe Anatoly Karpov.

Having battled each other for years, they seemed to Waitzkin to be the inhabitants of "a walled kingdom of two. Each wanted out of this hateful intimacy, but they seemed destined to battle one another forever." Kasparov views Karpov as a Communist collaborator whose recent conversion to liberal democracy is only further evidence of his deceitful nature; Kasparov speaks his very name with "Miltonic distaste." And yet after one of their particularly complicated games culminated in a draw, the two remained at the board, chatting amiably, analyzing together, shuffling the pieces back and forth with mind-boggling speed. Waitzkin asked Kasparov afterwards whether the two had, after all these years, made up. The champion scoffed, "I wouldn't go to a restaurant with him, but who else can I really talk with about these games?" ❐

Craig S. Lerner is a third-year student at Harvard Law School.

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A MOTHER'S ORDEAL: ONE WOMAN'S FIGHT AGAINST CHINA'S ONE-CHILD POLICY

Steven W. Mosher

Harcourt Brace & Company / 335 pages / $21.95

reviewed by JULIE MCGURN

Four decades after Chairman Mao commended women for holding up half the sky, the edifice he erected is keeping them tied to the ground. Nowhere is this more apparent than in China's coercive population program—which limits each family to one child. Western attention, both pro and con, has fixed almost exclusively on forced abortions. In fact, forced abortion is not so much the premise as the culmination of a state policy that controls human reproduction as it would the yearly output of a steel factory.

The debate exploded into the headlines again this spring, when China released figures showing its population growth had hit an all-time low, exceeding goals the Chinese themselves hadn't figured on reaching until the year 2010. Naturally the subject of coercion has been raised, and even the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* devoted front-page attention to the statistics and the abuses they prefigured. In the meantime, Americans elected a president who had campaigned on forcing Peking's adherence to human rights. Yet Bill Clinton's only explicit action affecting China's population program was to restore funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) that helps pay for it.

It was sinologist Steven Mosher who first broke the story of the one-child policy more than a decade ago. And when China protested he found himself kicked out of Stanford's doctoral program. In his latest book, *A Mother's Ordeal*, Mosher tells much more about the policy, but in a way that puts a human face on cold statistics. For the book is a first-person narrative by a Chinese nurse named Chi An, who was both enforcer and victim of this policy.

A sickly child who grew up during the Cultural Revolution, Chi An tells of her modest ambitions to become a nurse, get married, and have a family. Like others, when she did finally marry, she was bullied into signing a one-child agreement. After accidently becoming pregnant with her second child, Chi An found herself subject to "remedial measures"—for in China conceiving without government permission is a crime. Like most Chinese women, too, while she did not favor abortion, she was not opposed to it either, not least because she believed China's population growth had to be curbed, whatever her personal distaste for the procedure.

After her own abortion, Chi An began work in the women's clinic of a state-owned factory. She thus became part of an all-encompassing population program that begins with state-allocated "birth quotas" (of *one*) for which women must first apply, mandatory contraception, and sterilization. Official government statistics cite a 25 percent surge in sterilizations; as of 1991, 12.5 million had undergone the procedure. Chi An mentions how some doctors performed so many tubal ligations that they reportedly felt as if they were "spaying cows."

Even the most personal information is treated as a matter of state record. As Chi An recalls:

> Every shop and office in the factory had a [Women's] Federation representative, whose job it was to track the menstrual cycles and the contraceptive methods of all young women of childbearing age who worked there. This record keeping was done publicly, by writing each woman's name, means of contraception and expected date of menstruation on a large blackboard that hung in a conspicuous place. When her period came, she was required to place a check mark next to her name. Women occasionally lied about the onset of their menses, but of course it was only a matter of time before they were found out. If a woman failed to start her period on schedule, the Women's Federation representative would order her to go to the women's health clinic for an examination. A positive pregnancy test spelled trouble for a woman with a child.

Everything is done for the convenience of the state: Chi An reports that steel IUDs—one size fits all—are used instead of the healthier plastic alternatives because they show up on the women's quarterly inspection X-rays.

As for the women who become pregnant anyway, the state has an answer for that as well. Chi An herself became something of an expert in locking up women in a storeroom until they "agreed" to abort. After all, Deng Xiaoping did say: "Use whatever means you must to reduce the population, but do it." Chi An faithfully followed his dictum even with her best friend, Ah Fang, who had enraged Chi An by becoming "illegally pregnant" and then hiding out in another town to have her baby.

Not only did Chi An have her friend hunted down, she had her tossed into the storeroom in an advanced stage of pregnancy. Ultimately Ah Fang went into labor, but not before begging Chi An to let her have her baby; since there were no other witnesses, Chi An could simply say that Ah Fang had had her baby alone. Instead, Chi An informed her boss and Ah Fang, in heavy labor, was pulled onto the back of a truck, rushed to the hospital and aborted. Although Chi An had some qualms about what she had done, her boss congratulated her because Ah Fang had not only been aborted but sterilized. Perhaps this is what Peng Peiyun, minister of the State Family Planning Commission, was referring to when she told the *South China Morning Post* that "we in China consider it to be persuasion and reasoning until [the woman] agrees."

Julie McGurn, formerly of the Eagle Forum, is a writer living in Hong Kong.

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Ah Fang and other "pleaders" were he "toughest to deal with":

> Some went into the operating room still begging, making everyone uneasy and uncomfortable. At least where these pleaders were concerned, my sympathy soon gave way to irritation. Why couldn't they understand that we clinic workers were not personally responsible for our actions? The doctors were only following orders. I was only a minor functionary. Besides, I, too, had been compelled to have an abortion. I, too, had only one child. Why should anyone be allowed to have more children than I?

But Chi An's story takes an ironic :wist when she finally leaves China with ıer one little boy to join her husband who ıs studying in the U.S. While abroad, Chi An becomes pregnant. Since the family ɔlanned on eventually returning to China, Chi An and her husband agree to write to her former colleague at the population control office, certain that an exception would be made since they were no longer in China. What came back to them was shocking. "Second children are absolutely banned," she was told. "If you cannot have this abortion done abroad, then the factory director orders you to return to China immediately."

The book's subtitle—"One Woman's Fight Against China's One-Child Policy"—is somewhat misleading, in that it makes Chi An out to be some kind of crusader. In truth, Chi An's campaign against the one-child policy did not begin until she became pregnant while with her husband in the U.S., and it occupies only a small part of the book. Far from being a saint, Chi An comes across at times as cold-hearted and selfish. But that does not take away from the story's value as an insider's view of China's population program.

Chi An eventually applied for, and received, asylum from the Reagan administration, with Steven Mosher's help. But the current administration and the human-rights establishment have been noticeably silent on the population program that even the *New York Times* called "draconian." The silence has been glaring among "women's" activists, especially considering that female babies are much more likely to be aborted. (According to the *South China Morning Post*, "one report says 113 boys are being born for every 100 girls.") In her latest tour of Asia, for example, Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Cal.) scolded the Chinese for human-rights abuses but uttered not a peep about its one-child policy. Perhaps she has more compelling loyalties. ❐

CORRESPONDENCE

(continued from page 10)

Jack and a panic meeting was called. About 5:00 a.m. Bobby was sent to Sen. Symington's suite to withdraw the offer and to ask him to be silent about it. Symington was told he could have any other position he desired in return for his silence, but that Lyndon Johnson was the V.P. candidate.

All of this was known to CBS, and to Charles Collingwood in particular. CBS had hired the son of then governor of Minnesota Orville Freeman, ostensibly as a page, but in reality as a messenger carrying information from his father to CBS reporters. Incidentally, Gov. Freeman went on to be secretary of agriculture in Jack Kennedy's cabinet. To this day, I do not know why CBS sat on this story. They reported and speculated on Richard Nixon's purportedly secret night flight to confer with Nelson Rockefeller in New York. . . .

—Harry W. Sandberg, M.D.
Linden, California

KALorama

As a retired airline captain. I found the article by James Oberg on the KAL tragedy not quite "the real story" ("KAL 007: The Real Story," *TAS*, October 1993).

The U.N. did *not* get the theory of the constant magnetic heading of 246° from the USSR's recovered flight recorder. That theory came from Inspector Joe McNeil of the FAA's New York Flight Standards Office, and was submitted to ICAO as a review by the Air Navigation Commission on November 17, 1984. Insp. McNeil, whom I subsequently worked with, submitted this theory as the only possible way the plane could have gotten to where it supposedly was. Nobody, including McNeil, was really happy with this theory, however.

It assumes that the crew was totally incompetent. That is the only conclusion that can be drawn if one is to accept the constant 260° magnetic heading theory. The INS is checked at regular intervals. It must be checked for ground speed every time a waypoint is crossed in order to give an accurate ETA for the following waypoint. It would be inconceivable that someone in the crew did not check the *cross track* numbers, which gives the distance in miles from the planned track. It should always be zero, or a very low number. Anything over five miles left or right of track is cause for immediate action.

A memo "falling into the hands of Yeltsin officials" is just too cozy to be believable considering the source, be it the U.N. or the Soviets. Neither the cockpit voice recorder, nor the flight data recorder, was mounted on "the rear bulkhead." The CVR was obviously mounted in the cockpit, and the FDR was mounted in the rudder.

The fact that a B-747 never ditched at sea is totally irrelevant. The description of "aviation gas spraying wildly" is a figment of the author's imagination. The fuel is basically kerosene, with a few additives. . . .

—Edward J. Toner, Jr.
TWA Goodwill Ambassador
Howell, New Jersey

Upon reading James Oberg's article, I am somewhat confused on a particular point. In the sidebar titled "Useful Idiots: An Honor Roll," R.W. Johnson makes reference to a notation written by the pilot of KAL 007. The notation reads "1200 D/H." Johnson makes much of the fact that the "sinister" notation was entered, scratched out, and then entered further down on the weight manifest.

My own guess is that the notation refers not to deadheading passengers but to a minimum-descent-altitude "decision height" which would be published on the approach charts for the specific destination airport. In this case, 1,200 feet above sea level. At that altitude, if the approach could not be safely executed, the aircraft would then go around for another try at the approach or fly to an alternate airport where meteorologic conditions were better. Deadheading crew members are usually referred to as "non-revs," (non-revenue producing). Also, if there were six people deadheading, 1200 would make them a rather corpulent lot. The fact that the entry "1200 D/H" was scratched out and moved further down on the manifest

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would make sense, as this is a critical piece of data necessary when executing an instrument approach at the end of a flight. I cannot account for this notation being on a weight manifest unless the captain was attempting to estimate the weight of the aircraft during the approach phase of the flight for the purpose of computing the proper approach speeds.

In any event, this would make R.W. Johnson's turgid speculations seem even more ridiculous. —*Charles Roberts*
Merrimack, New Hampshire

A friend informed me that I was cited in an article in your October issue. Investigating, I found that I was, indeed, cited, as one of ten persons listed as "Useful Idiots: An Honor Roll" in an article by James Oberg. I do not recall having previously seen such a boorishly ill-mannered piece—in addition to this list there are at least four references to "conspiracy nuts" or "spy-flight nuts." . . .

It would be easy to respond in kind to Oberg. Apart from his bad manners he displays a less than complete regard for the truth since, despite his claim, he made no effort whatsoever to contact either me or F. Reese Brown, the editor of the journal in which my review appeared. Nor is he sufficiently attentive to important details such as giving correctly the title of the journal in which my review appeared, *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence* (Spring 1986), so that an interested reader might be able to read the review if she or he so desired.

But I do not want to respond in kind. Instead, I will call attention to the most remarkable aspect of Oberg's article and the one that is overwhelmingly the most important. This is that he doesn't have the slightest trace of an understanding of what the issue is regarding the flight of KAL 007 on September 1, 1983, and he has even less understanding of what constitutes an argument or how a rational person is expected to weigh evidence.

First, what is the issue? It has nothing whatsoever to do with the tragic fate of the plane, shot down. Suppose the plane had escaped or suppose the plane had simply been forced to land on Sakhalin Island. No one of these possible outcomes, nor any imaginable other outcome, has any bearing on the point at issue. This is, simply: Why was the plane invading Soviet airspace over Sakhalin Island? Oberg devotes about one-quarter of his article to this question. The rest of his article has nothing to do with the issue.

Second, what is Oberg's conception of an answer to this key question? It is to confidently assert that it was a "chain of accidental circumstances." He apparently imagines that if it is possible that it happened by chance then it has been proved that it did happen by chance and that this is the explanation. . . .

Return to KAL 007. The article of mine that Oberg cites was a review of two books, by Dallin and Clubb, both of whom are included on Oberg's list of "Idiots." Each of these books suggested ways in which the flight could have happened by chance, involving equipment malfunction and/or crew incompetence. Both of them attempted to estimate relevant probabilities. Each of the books reasoned essentially qualitatively to conclude that the flight could not have happened accidentally. In my review, I made the probabilistic argument explicit and used the probabilities developed from actual data by the authors to reach the same conclusion.

I can use the same approach based on Oberg's article. What is the chain of accidental circumstances cited by Oberg? First, "the INS never took command of the autopilot" because either the crew forgot or they manually engaged the INS when it was too far off course; second, "the crew should have double-checked their course (as required by airline policy and by good airmanship)" but they didn't; third, "the actual latitude and longitude, as displayed, would have been incorrect" and the crew did not, as they are supposed to, check coordinates against the flight plan. This remarkable chain of crew mistakes is supposed to have occurred on a flight path that all crews knew took them perilously close to Soviet airspace that was over some of the most top-secret Soviet installations. This is simply incredible. From some data cited in my review, NASA found that over a period of five years and about two million flights, U.S. pilots found themselves off course only about twenty-one times, a probability of nearly .00001. Even this probability by itself is enough to make anyone doubt the "accident" version. From additional considerations I estimate that the probability of this chain of mistakes is less than one in a million. That is why rational persons accept an alternative explanation: the plane was over Sakhalin Island because it was intended to be. . . .

There is much additional ancillar
information. For example, what woul
Oberg have to say about the KAL fligh
(the same airline) of April 20, 1978 tha
"accidentally" flew over the other top-se
cret Soviet area, the Kola Peninsula
This flight had been heading northwes
for five hours when it suddenly turne
southeast into the Soviet Union. This ha
been called the worst navigational erro
of modern times. The flight flew directl
over the top-secret area, ignored al
warnings, was hit by a shell, bu
nonetheless continued to fly over th
area for another 300 miles before land
ing. Is this another "accident"?

The idea that some of us are deter
mined to think the worst of U.S. policie
and hence conjure up a "conspiracy theo
ry" is ridiculous. I would be *absolutel
delighted* if someone can demonstrat
that the KAL 007 flight was an acciden
However, a rational argument based o
the weight of the evidence is needed
Ranting and raving is not enough.

—*David W. Mille*
Columbia Universit
New York, New Yor

As an admirer of Jim Oberg's work, I wa
prepared to be enlightened by his "KAl
007: The Real Story." Sad to relate, how
ever, I encountered a piece marred by
distinctly ugly tone—and, if judged solel
by his erroneous references to me, per
haps a not wholly accurate one, either. . .

Oberg says that a "Project Censored
review by a California academic in 198
cited me, "described as the editor o
Defense Science magazine, who revealed
that Korean Airlines planes regularly fl
over Soviet territory on missions for th
CIA." I never "revealed" any such thing
Shortly after the shootdown, I was inter
viewed by a radio station and was asked
as the author of two books and many
articles on intelligence matters, my reac
tion to Soviet charges that KAL 007 wa
engaged on an espionage mission.
replied that at best, a *circumstantial* cas
could be made, but it was a pretty thi
one, and that we probably never woul
know for certain. I was then asked if
would comment on reports that KAI
routinely used its planes for espionag
purposes. I replied that I had heard suc
reports, but had no idea if they were true
Subsequently, I discovered, a newspa
per—without bothering to interview
me—published a garbled version whic

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had me flatly asserting that KAL planes routinely overflew the Soviet Union on espionage missions. Apparently, it was this erroneous newspaper clip that led the California professor to proclaim the presumed revelation as among the "most censored" stories of 1984. . . .

Oberg adds another link to this chain of error by going on to say, "But Volkman's quotation itself first appeared in an unverified newspaper clip, and a quick check would have shown that Volkman was not ever the editor of *Defense Science* but simply a staffer at *Penthouse*. When asked directly, he's happy to admit that he was merely repeating a rumor he had heard."

These two sentences are only distantly related to fact. First of all, at the time of the KAL incident, I was a contributing editor of *Military Science and Technology* magazine (later renamed *Defense Science*), as well as several other magazines, and listed on their mastheads as such. I was not a staffer at *Penthouse*; I was a contributing editor, as a glance at that magazine's masthead will attest. . . .

Aside from the errors relating to me personally, I was also bothered by some astonishing assertions in the article. We are told, for example, that Soviet officials privately "shuddered" when they read their experts' reports. How does Oberg know that? Was he there? Then we're told that falsehoods "invented by KGB disinformation specialists" fooled the Western media. Oberg provides no evidence for this ugly assertion. (Nor does he address the inevitable follow-up question: If the KGB was so cunning, capable of such feats as manipulating the Western media, then how come the Soviet Union collapsed?)

In any event, Oberg moves on to the ICAO report, which he touts as the final answer to the KAL 007 mystery. From the summary Oberg provides, that conclusion may or may not be true (apparently, a degree in aeronautical science would be helpful). But assuming Oberg's judgment to be true, why, then, didn't the media trumpet the ICAO report? Well, Oberg explains, it got "spiked" in the Western press, apparently hinting at still another KGB master stroke. This is an ugly assertion unsupported by any evidence, although Oberg concedes that the *New York Times* carried an article on the ICAO report. But Oberg dismisses it, pronouncing the news story a "highly distorted" account written by a correspondent captivated by "spy plane theories." . . .

—Ernest Volkman
Danbury, Connecticut

James Oberg replies:

To Captain Toner: I never meant to say that ICAO got the 246° theory from the flight recorder, and in fact that theory was fully described in the December 1983 preliminary ICAO report on the disaster. This even predates the contribution of Mr. McNeil. The DFDR, however, did confirm the theory.

That the crew showed very poor judgment seems unavoidable, and at other times other crews have shown equally bad judgment, sad to say. Stout defenders of the honor of all captains everywhere have a hard time explaining the very rare but still occasional incompetence of a few pilots in a very few instances. Don't forget, these guys were in almost constant touch with KE 015, which they believed to be only a few minutes behind them. Those radio conversations may have been enough to convince Captain Chun that all had to be well with his navigation. He sure did not sound at all worried on the CVR.

The location of the data recorders was told to me by a Boeing spokesman. The comment on spraying aviation gas is from an interview with a Japanese fishing boat captain who witnessed the crash. It is not a figment of my imagination that the Japanese seaman recalled gasoline mist descending over his boat after he had heard the plane pass overhead, or that his American interviewer (a Navy captain in San Diego, with whom I have talked at length) recalls that the ship's logbook still smelled of jet fuel even several weeks later.

I thank Charles Roberts for his contribution to piercing the KAL-007 controversy. The "deadhead" interpretation was given me independently by two different 747 captains, who remarked that 200 lbs. was the standard allowance for a person *plus* luggage. Since the entry was involved with computing takeoff weight, I find it implausible that it could have been information to be used upon arrival at Seoul. And if it wasn't the deadheads, where on the manifest *do* they appear? In any event, Mr. Roberts is right: R.W. Johnson is as far off base either way.

Regarding David Miller, I regret that my inquiry letter of last August 1 did not reach him, but if this thousand-word letter had been his reply, I wouldn't have changed a thing.

First, I find in it no references to, no retractions of, and no excuses for the Soviet lies that he promulgated in his original article about the airliner's behavior. He overlooked them completely.

Second, a true scholar is constantly reassessing his conclusions based on new evidence, but the most significant new evidence regarding the KAL-007 controversy is the June 1993 ICAO report on the black boxes, and Miller's letter makes it clear he has not even seen it, much less studied it carefully. Yet he vigorously defends and repeats his old conclusions, even though they are long overtaken by new findings.

The navigation theories reported in my article reflect the conclusions of ICAO's experts, although they certainly are in accord with judgments I made years ago based on my own assessment of the evidence surrounding this tragedy. It is thus misleading to attack me personally for the expert views I am only transmitting. Miller claims he would be "absolutely delighted" if someone could demonstrate that the flight was an accident, but when ICAO does exactly that, he refuses to acknowledge even the existence of that report. He should acknowledge as well the limits of his own probabilistic methodology. By his reasoning, no one ever wins the lottery.

The term "useful idiot" was chosen by the editors, not by me, but the phrase is a historically valid appellation for a class of Western intellectuals who accepted and promulgated Soviet propaganda in the bad old days of the Cold War. Miller, alas, seems to cling vigorously to a mythology of Soviet-sponsored deceptions about KAL-007 (in 1983) and KAL-902 (in 1978) long after the Soviet empire has itself collapsed. It's almost touching.

Finally, I'm delighted that Ernest Volkman confirms the accuracy of my description of "Project Censored." I'm sorry he objects to my argumentative tone—I only wish that he'd objected as vehemently to the way he was used by the spy-flight nuts. But, then, what can you expect from someone who, against all evidence, scoffs at the idea of KGB disinformation, or the possibility that Western coverage of one of Soviet

(continued on page 95)

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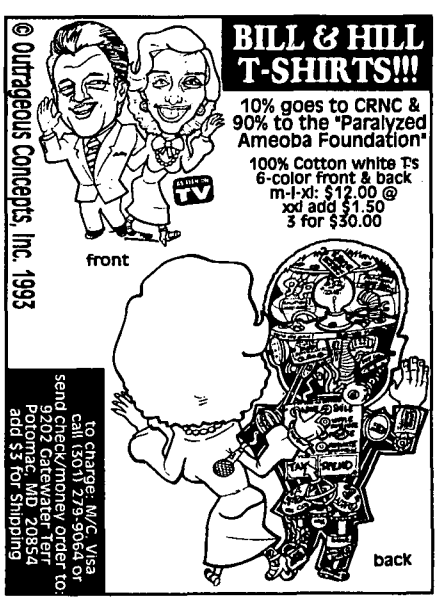
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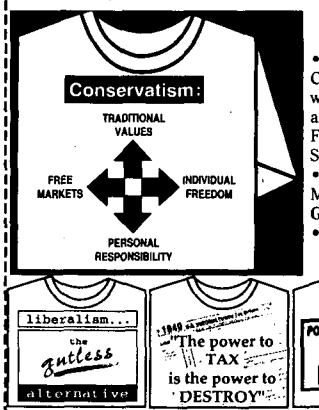

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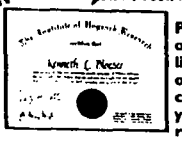

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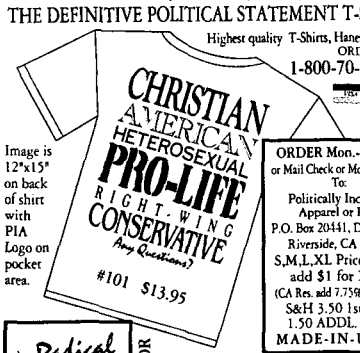

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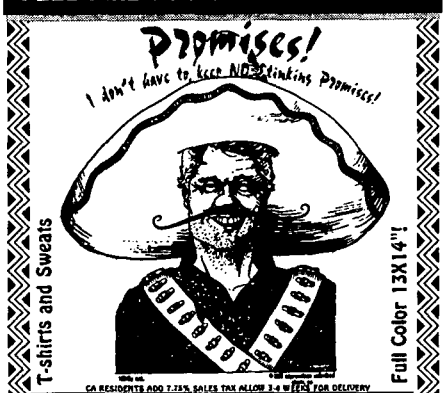

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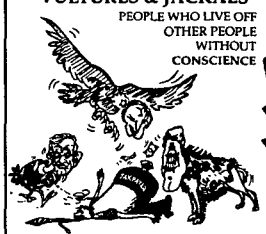

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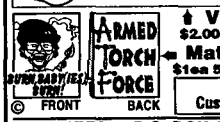

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Communism's last major crimes was colored by our elites' gleeful disdain for anti-Communism?

The Navrozov Files

As late as 1991, *Pravda* called me the "most extremist American journalist" because I argued that the "strategic superplague" was being developed in Gorbachev's Russia, and the West was endangered as never before. Gorbachev's regime fell, and since March 1992 I have published close to 200 articles in fourteen "major Russian democratic periodicals." Now I argue that the danger is a possible comeback of Stalinism, with a far more explicit Nazi and old-Russian variety of anti-Semitism, which has been a special target of my attacks.

Tragicomically, in her survey of the Russian press for *The American Spectator* (October 1992 and September 1993), Cathy Young had picked only those four articles of mine that she could readily distort in order to smear me as, for example, an anti-Semite! Thus, in one of my articles on Hitler (published also in the predominantly Jewish émigré periodicals) I claim, on the basis of my study of votes in Germany in 1932, that Hitler received most of his votes from small-town Lutherans, scared as they were by what they perceived as the "filth" of the big cities, such as Freud's tenet that a boy of two seeks to possess his mother sexually. That was enough for Ms. Young to claim that my article "seems to suggest that Hitler's hatred for Jews was really the fault of Freud."

Note Ms. Young's "seems" in her sentence above. To those less vigilant, such as my Jewish readers in Russia, Israel, and the United States, it does not seem that way. But to Ms. Young it *seems* that I am a closet Hitlerite.

No less brazenly Ms. Young insinuates: "Navrozov analyzes the Islamic world's fight for 'purity' against the filth' spread by the 'formerly Christian' West on an unmistakably sympathetic note." That is, those less vigilant may be mistaken here, but *she* detects my unmistakably sympathetic note toward Islamic fundamentalism. You see? Not only am I pro-Hitler, but I am also pro-Moslem, pro-Arab, and anti-Judeo-Christian.

Within this scope I cannot cite all of Ms. Young's brazen innuendos. In Russia, we called this a "public KGB informer's vigilance." A public KGB informer's article, distorting its victim's statements to smear him politically, was followed by arrest. In the United States, no arrest follows, but the anti-Semitic smear may have far-reaching consequences. Ironically, in Russia, a public KGB informer's vigilance is now extinct or at least dormant. But I have found it, in its most virulent form, in Ms. Young, an immigrant from Russia, taking advantage of the fact that few readers of *The American Spectator* read the Russian press, and so there is no limit to her distortions to suit her "vigilance."

To be fair to Ms. Young, I should not represent her as a pure embodiment of diabolically sly witch-hunting. She used to translate my articles into Russian because I had no time to do it. But I realized that she did not understand them and needed thorough editing, since she thinks in clichés. Today she charges me with political crimes because such charges are clichés and because any deviation from clichés does seem to her a political crime.

—Lev Navrozov
Riverdale, New York

Cathy Young replies:
I confess that I have not seen all or even most of the articles Lev Navrozov has contributed to the Russian press. The ones I have seen often had a tangible anti-Western bent, and since Mr. Navrozov had once made a name for himself as a hypervigilant defender of Western democracy against the Soviet threat I thought this would make an interesting item. (Mr. Navrozov does not explain his reference to the "imaginary" threat of Stalinism which, according to him, mass-market hack George Orwell used to scare the bourgeois public.)

As for the "Hitler and Freud" essay, on which Mr. Navrozov focuses his response: several people, none of them paranoid about anti-Semitism, drew my attention to it and expressed puzzlement that a liberal magazine such as *Ogonyok* would publish something that could so easily be read as anti-Jewish. Is it really innocuous to suggest that Hitler's hatred of Jews was a result of filial piety offended by Freud's desecration of the mother-son bond (as though anti-Semitism had not existed before Freud!)? As for Mr. Navrozov's theory that conservative small-town Lutherans backed Hitler out of revulsion against big-city "filth," exemplified by (Jewish) Freudianism, it hinges on some proof that small-town German voters had *heard* of Freud. It is true, of course, that psychoanalysis was branded a "Jewish science" by the Nazis; but so was Einstein's theory of relativity, which hardly contains anything to offend the sensibilities of provincial Lutherans.

I did not mean to imply that Mr. Navrozov's essay had any anti-Semitic intent, but rather that his determination to defy conventional wisdom—an often admirable disposition—has led him to make highly dubious and, in the context of today's Russia, inflammatory statements. Nor was it my wish to damage his career in the American press, which was over, as far as I know, long before my *TAS* article appeared.

Finally, Mr. Navrozov sees fit to bring up my personal association with him years ago as a translator of his columns into his native Russian for the émigré weekly the *New Gazette*, where I then worked. But I fear his memory fails him. If I was as inept as he claims, why did Mr. Navrozov, after the newspaper folded, ask me several times to translate his longer essays for other publications and recommend me to others as a translator? I may, perhaps, stand accused of ingratitude; but incompetence, no.

The Moderate Spirit

This aging moderate is terribly disappointed in your magazine. For a while it represented a clever attack on the silly antics of some liberals. Of late, a pejorative note has resonated in your articles. You are irrational about the Clintons, kind of demonizing them; you tout an awful character like Pat Buchanan, totally disregarding his anti-Semitism; you are unable to witness to the fanaticism of the religious right. Your mindset is so convoluted that you cannot recognize Buchanan for the spiritual shanty Irishman that he is. Some of your articles sound like the rantings of the young cranks on the *Dartmouth Review*.

Alas, another journal has gone down into the lower depths. You would be wise to forego this easy kind of pop journalism and return to the conservative concepts of class, style, and balance.

—Morton Perry
Grand Junction, Colorado

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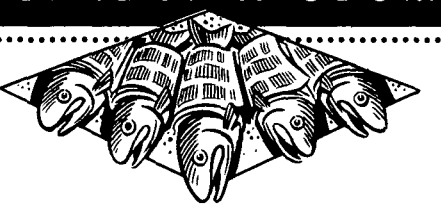

New York Times

Photo caption of the decade:

After almost 30 years of delays caused by planning and environmental challenges, the last stretch of Interstate 287, between Montville and Mahwah, N.J., is to be opened in the next month, six months ahead of schedule.

[October 16, 1993]

Larry King Weekend

Hillary recharged:

KING: Your first car—We were talking about first cars.
Ms. CLINTON: Yes.
KING: Mine was a '55—'53 Ford. And yours was a '63 Olds.
Ms. CLINTON: Right.
KING: Right? And you were telling me you had to take the battery out?
Ms. CLINTON: Well, anybody listening to this will probably write and say, you know, "This just shows you how crazy she is." My car had a personality—my first car. And I was in law school, and my car had a battery that did not like to be left in the car overnight. It would drain out if it were—especially in the New England cold.
KING: So, what did you have to do with it?
Ms. CLINTON: So, I unhooked it every night and took it to my dorm room and kept it warm, and then I put it back in the next morning.
KING: You—
Ms. CLINTON: And it made a very happy battery and a car that worked! [laughs]
KING: Did it have a name? I think we're losing it here.
Ms. CLINTON: It did. It did.
KING: You know, it's been a long week.
Ms. CLINTON: It did have a name, yes. I called my car "Julius."
KING: "Julius"?
Ms. CLINTON: "Julius," yes.
KING: Did the battery have a name?
Ms. CLINTON: No.
KING: No?
Ms. CLINTON: I did not name the battery. I think it was Eveready, or something like that.

[October 2, 1993]

Toledo Blade

In a column entitled "New Age," the Nutrition Nazis speak out:

It makes sense that smoking and drinking, both acknowledged causes of some of society's major diseases, ought to be somehow penalized—and sales taxes generally are difficult to deny. But the Clinton bean counters ought to uncover one more sacred cow as a source of sin tax revenue.

That would be the products of our giant, powerful meat and dairy industries. Hamburgers, ice cream, milk, eggs, cheese, lamb chops, hot dogs. . . .

So we offer a proposal of our own: To help finance the new national health care system, lay a modest surcharge on any food that derives more than 25 percent of its calories from fat.

That's right, a fat tax. Eating fat is no more sinful than smoking or drinking, but its overall impact on our nation's health is just as enormous. And since our talent for denial allows us to munch ourselves to disease as easily as we puff or sip, it may behoove government to help us face the facts in a way we seem able to recognize: by imposing a financial penalty.

[October 3, 1993]

Japan Times

Fidel meets the Rosa Luxemburg of Bolivia:

Cuban president Fidel Castro won a surprise endorsement in Bolivia over the weekend.

Maria Lucia Balcazar, niece of Bolivia's new president, said she would never wash her hand again after shaking hands with Castro on Saturday.

When President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada asked why, his niece said, "Fidel is more important than Walt Disney."

Castro, clearly delighted with the remark, bent down and kissed the 8-year-old on the cheek.

[August 10, 1993]

Duluth News-Tribune

Up in the Great North, original biblica research proving that, though th Nazarene was a gifted publicist, hi gay rights position has been lost fo 2000 years.

Both John 13:23 and 21:20 acknowledg Jesus' love of John, one of his three close associates. In John 21:21,22 Peter affirm the relationship between Jesus and Joh was different.

Of course, if we note the non-canonica writings of Jesus' romance with Mar Magdalene, then perhaps Jesus was bisexual.

[August 5, 1993]

Stanford Magazine

Another inane passage in a full blown interview with Dean Rober Gregg, Episcopalian chaplain o Stanford University who in vapi remark after vapid remark tastefull refrains from all mention of God o even God Is Dead—onward Christia Therapists!

SM: What is the job of the chaplaincy?
Gregg: There are three of us who wor full-time on campus and another perso who works in the biomedical ethics cente at the Medical School and hospital. My jo involves being a dean of Memorial Churc and all the events that take place in ther and teaching in the Classics Departmen and the Religious Studies Department. oversee the various ministries of the differ ent faiths that have representatives on cam pus and student constituencies, and ar available to people who want to discuss th range of issues that people might bring t someone who they hope would have a impartiality in a complex system. When arrived here, it dawned on me that give the wonderful diversity of Stanford's popu lation—student, staff, and faculty—it wa important to me to have a chaplaincy staf that was diverse in terms of gender an race, and that we have done.

[June 1993]

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Minneapolis Star Tribune

ı the pages of a great American daily, ɐeb Price reports on things Minnesotans ɐed to know:

ɜay men are passionate fans of strong ʻomen—tough cookies like Joan ʻrawford, Bette Davis, Mae West, Marlene ɨietrich. The list wouldn't be complete ʻithout the New York City gals who ɛcently gave me a little something to ɛmember them by. They're the Knights /restling Club for Women.

The club exists because two gay men, ob Hofmann and Ed Unger, thought ʻomen should be encouraged to unleash ıeir physical power. "Most women don't ɛalize how much strength they have. And ıey are afraid to use it," says Hofmann, ʻho jokes he's the only male president of a ɛsbian group.

The idea of starting a women's wrestling ɛam originated at Gay Games III, an ɔlympic-style international competition that rew 7,300 athletes to Vancouver in 1990. ɔnly wrestling was closed to women.

[September 22, 1993]

New York Times Magazine

ʻhe ebullient Lucinda Franks cata-ɔgues the many fine achievements of er prodigy son and all his peers, creat-ıg a list that quite properly does not ıclude the ability to read, to write, to ıake simple mathematical calcula-ons, to speak only when spoken to, nd—apparently—to use bar soap:

ı spite of the confusion these children xperience, few would disagree that they re, in many ways, a splendid generation. ſy son, Joshua, 9, and his friends are mazing in their generosity, sensitivity, bility to stretch across an intellectual anyon and meet adults on their own terms. ʻhey have highly developed senses of jus-ce and fairness, rejecting stereotypes and mbracing oddities in their peers, whether a air style or a disability. They are disdain-ıl of smoking and drug use, can sniff out ypocrisy and have social consciences that re poignant. They are so worried about the ɛw trees on their block that last year they ɔrmed an earth club to keep them free of ɨtter. At times, the child in our children okes endearingly through the veneer of ophistication. "Mom, please don't buy ʋory soap anymore" was his most recent nvironmental request. "Why?" I asked. Because they shoot elephants to get the ʋory, don't they?" he replied.

[October 10, 1993]

Washington Post

The prosecution of a 1960s radical for manslaughter and armed robbery occasions the 1963-64 president of the radical SDS, Mr. Todd Gitlin, to compose yet another authoritative opuscule:

Conservatives tend to crow or bemoan—we told you those kids would come to naught. Having presided over the gold-leafed decay of the 1980s, they cannot grant that the anti-war movement, for all its (relatively few) sins, its many failings and its occasional fugitive, saved the soul of America. As long as high-level war criminals are still lionized in Washington, and war veterans beg for work on the street corners, as long as Americans wrestle with questions about authority and materialism and violence and whether the world can be saved, the antiwar movement as a whole remains one of the most successful such democratic movements in history. It saved lives, limbs and minds. It was a lousy revolution, but it was, on the whole, a remarkable human triumph—and a hard act to follow.

[September 26, 1993]

Newsweek

Another unanticipated scientific breakthrough—The MacArthur Foundation gave a $225, 000 "genius" grant to this doltish charlatan:

Every month, women wonder why menstruation has to be such a mess. Margie Profet, 35, a self-described evolutionary biologist, wondered more than most. In 1988, she says, an early-morning dream gave her the answer: that menstrual bleeding was not merely the body's way of shedding the built-up uterine lining when no baby has been conceived. It was also, in the dream, a protective mechanism for cleansing the uterus of infectious organisms carried there by sperm. "Boys really do have cooties," says Profet. "What they told you in kindergarten was true." After reading copiously on this subject, Profet last week presented her 52-page scholarly article in the *Quarterly Review of Biology*—and so set off a squall about a process so ordinary that few researchers have even thought to question it.

[October 4, 1993]

New York Times

A missive from one of the millions of very nice people who make American Liberalism a veritable gold mine for psychiatry and for Valium-mongers:

Excuse me, but your color is showing. "Ribbon Control," that silly article by Jamie Malanowski (Op-Ed, Sept. 4) about how every inane cause will soon sport its own colored ribbon, contains a racist blind spot you seem to have missed. A "flesh"-colored ribbon? And what color might that be exactly? Would that be a pallid pink and peach, an ebony black or perhaps a nutmeg reddish-brown? Whose "flesh" is this anyway?

When I was a child, my box of 64 Crayola crayons had a color called "flesh." But they long ago abandoned such obviously racist labeling. So should you.

—Michael S. Kimmel
New York

[September 20, 1993]

Associated Press

AP reporter Nita Lelyveld goes berserk at the word processor—or is it that Justice Ginsburg is a psychopath?

On her first day as a Supreme Court justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg would have surprised no one if she sat quietly, just taking in her new surroundings. Instead, America's second female Supreme Court justice asked question after question today—17 in all during her first hour on the bench.

The first came just nine minutes into arguments in the first case of the new term.

Seated at the far right end of the bench, six down from her only female colleague, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, Ginsburg repeatedly asked for clarifications and went over fine points in the case, which examined whether federal agencies may be sued by people who claim their constitutional rights are violated.

While other justices like Clarence Thomas leaned way back in their tall black leather chairs, cupping their chins on their hands and gazing at the ornate chamber ceiling, Ginsburg sat absolutely still.

She kept a fixed gaze on each of the lawyers before her—blinking often but looking away only to take notes or glance down at her papers.

She smiled only a few times—once, softly, when she first took her seat and looked out at the rows of people before her. Then an aide pushed her chair way in and she got down to business.

By the end of the first hour, Ginsburg appeared well settled into her new role. She even rocked slightly in her chair. But the expression on her face was one of concentration.

Many justices take a while to find their voices on the court. Justice David Souter waited three weeks before speaking. Thomas stayed silent until his second day.

[October 4, 1993]

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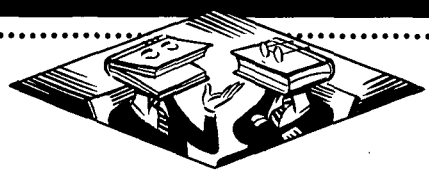

The President's Trollope

by Christopher Caldwel

It is one thing to read the literary classics as if they were timeless; quite another to hold that they were written specifically for today. The latter is most often a failing of the left, and comic examples abound—like the Trinidadian Marxist C.L.R. James's 1940s rereading of *Moby-Dick*, in which the *Pequod* is "industrial society," Ahab the Hitlerite "executive" class, Starbuck the bourgeois-morality-drugged proletariat, and Ishmael the Marxist intellectual vanguard.

I was immune to such post-facto allegorizing of the classics until I read *The Fixed Period*,[1] Anthony Trollope's futuristic novel of politically correct euthanasia, written in 1881 but set a hundred years later. I finished it on the day Hillary Clinton announced that she and the co-president were drawing up a "living will"—a written agreement that life-support systems be shut off in any illness where either of them loses his mental faculties. (What? No second term?)

The Fixed Period is narrated in first person by President Neverbend, a radical who has somehow become a mainstream politician in the former British colony of Britannula, whose young inhabitants, fleeing a deficit crisis in New Zealand, preoccupy themselves with building their country's infrastructure. To that end, Neverbend comes up with the "Fixed Period," a combination health plan/industrial policy, which will enrich the state by rationing health care to the old in the most efficient way possible—by killing them at the age of 68.

Neverbend wins over "the more quickly intelligent inhabitants of Britannula," and gains support from a Loser Bloc, who actually *want* to die, and petition for the age of dispatch to be lowered. Unfortunately, "the people for whose welfare I had done it all" do not see it the same way. Gabriel Crasweller, the popular farmer who is scheduled to be the first killed, balks. "Religion is brought in," and extremists begin to call the practice murder—which word Neverbend bans as "revolting to the majesty of the people." (The aged are to be not executed, but "deposited.") Besides, it couldn't be murder, since "this thing was to be done by the law."

Crasweller and his allies ("a scum of the population . . . men who knew nothing of progress and civilisation") are motivated primarily by the desire to keep providing for their families, so Neverbend stipulates that old people spend their last year in a "college," where "the mind may be weaned from the ignoble art of moneymaking." Then, Neverbend attacks his opponents on conflict-of-interest grounds: they oppose the scheme because they're afraid to die. And they're afraid to die because "they have not been instructed in matters of good and evil." Which pretty much settles it: "Though to me the politico-economical view of the subject was always very strong, the relief to be brought to the aged was the one argument to which no reply could be given."

Neverbend is a one-man anthology of contemporary political prejudices: To the reader, he is Kirkpatrick Sale, bringing up "so-called civilisation" at least once a paragraph. To his anti–Fixed Period son he is a Kennedy ("Have you no love of country, no patriotism, no feeling at any rate of what has been done for the world's welfare by your own family?"). To his anti-Fixed Period wife, he is a tut-tutting Michael Kinsley ("And she does not, in truth, mean a tenth of what she says"). To the condemned he is like Marian Wright Edelman or any other poverty hustler, extolling the people in whose name he has aggrandized himself. ("I had loved [Crasweller] the better because I had endeavoured to commence my experiment on his body. I had felt a vicarious regard for the honour which would have been done him, almost regarding it as though I myself were to go in his place.")

Even after he has been removed by British fleet sent by the "Secretary o Benevolence," Neverbend sees the prob lem as "not that the doctrine of the Fixe Period was in itself wrong, but that it wa impracticable because of the horror attending its last moments." That is, ther are never any moral problems with th plan, only logistical ones: When Cras weller's daughter anticipates the horror c her father's execution, Neverbend treats as a *practical* difficulty: "I had not in trut thought of it. But now, when the idea wa represented to my mind's eye, I ac knowledged to myself that it would b impossible that she should be left there fo the occasion." He adds, as an after thought, "And the cremating furnace mus be removed."

It's ironic that, while Trollope general ly appeals because of the timelessnes of his obsession with love-in-society this overtly ideological *jeu d'esprit* speak to us through its very topicality. Not ever age is one of blockheaded reform like ou own, but the early 1880s were. That is while there is a universality to the reform impulse, not every generation will fin *The Fixed Period* as terrifying as our ought to. (And John Major did giv Clinton a copy of Trollope's *The Way W Live Now* last March.)

Still, I'm not sure I approve of extend ing this topicality-mongering exercise t Trollope's other books, or to literature i general. Once you start identifying nove characters with contemporary politician they infect everything—much as you can' help seeing the actor if you've seen th movie before reading the book. Villains ar always better drawn then heroes, and whe you run down the years from the Celestin to Lady Macbeth to Madame Defarge, yo realize that reading the classics in light o contemporary politics is like going on a six-century-long date with Hillary Clin ton—an argument for euthanasia if I'v ever heard one. ❐

[1] Oxford , 186 pages, $8.95 (paper).

Christopher Caldwell is assistant managing editor of The American Spectator.

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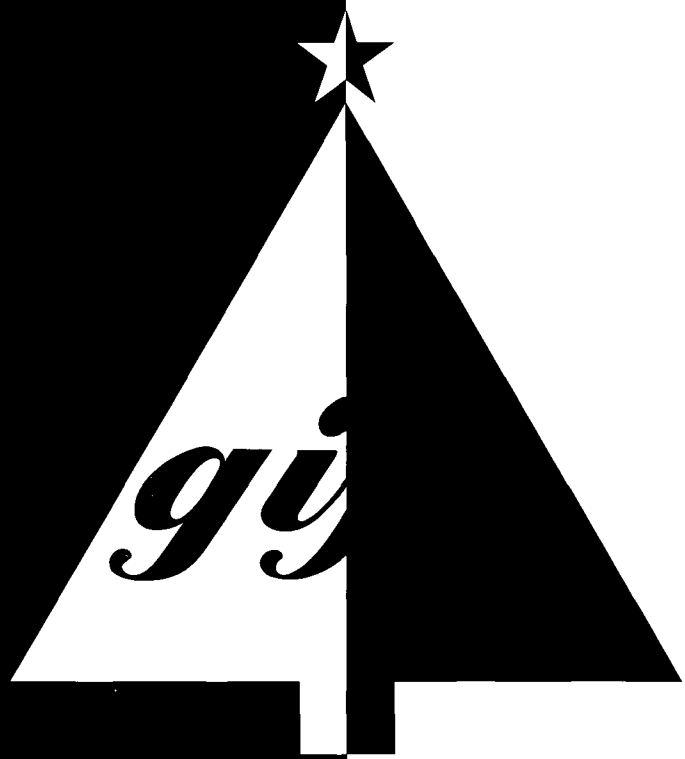

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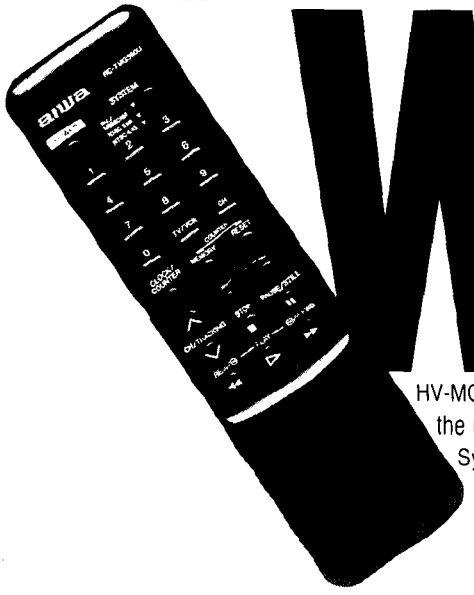

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